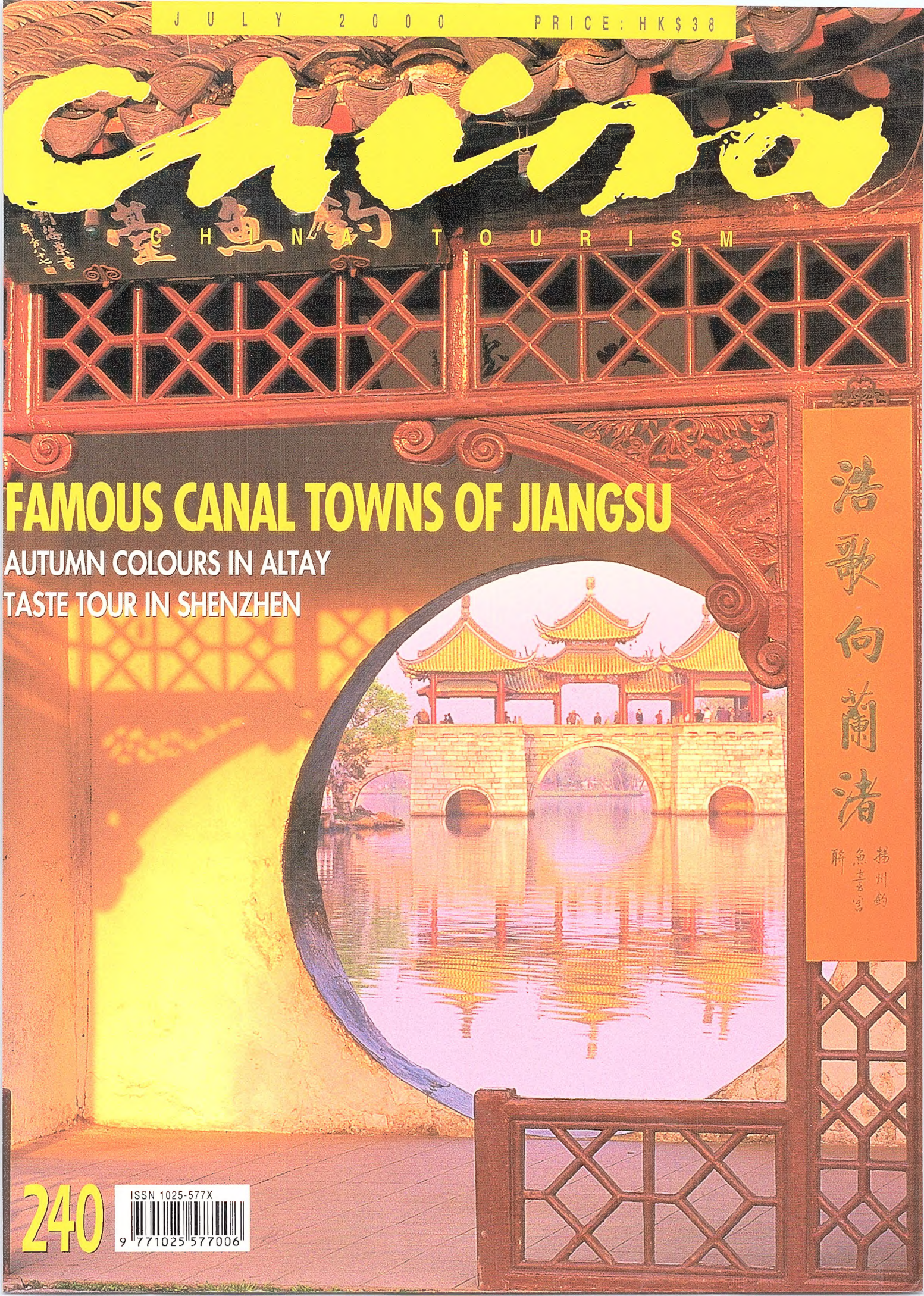


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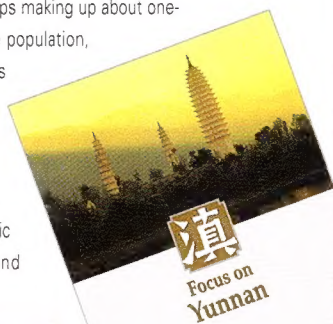


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The mountainous wonderland of Yunnan enjoys a favourable warm climate year round. Its capital, Kunming, sitting alongside Yunnan's largest lake, Dianchi, has the honourable name of "Spring City". The province is full of natural wonders and cultural relics, such as the Stone Forests, the Shangri-La, and the ancient cities of Dali and Lijiang. With over 20 diverse ethnic groups making up about one-third of the population, opportunities abound for you to see their characteristic cultures and customs.



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Shanghai, the largest metropolis in China, and formerly the Far East financial centre, has experienced dramatic development over the past century. The world-famous Bund along the Huangpu River shows you buildings of different historical periods and varied architectural styles, while skyscrapers are rising in the new area of Pudong. Shanghai's multiculturalism is seen in its music — operas, nostalgic jazz and discos — and in the busy commercial district of Nanjing and Huaihai roads.



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An important gateway into China, the fertile Pearl River Delta of the southern province of Guangdong fans out from Guangzhou to the South China Sea and borders Hong Kong and Macao. The province's natural scenic spots include the limestone pinnacles of Zhaoqing's Seven Star Crag, the red sandstone of Danxia Mountain, and the volcanic beauty of Xiqiao Mountain. The capital, Guangzhou, offers plenty of history in its museums, temples, mosques and old colonial buildings.



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Guizhou is a land of splendid natural scenery. Its towering mountains and karst landforms team up with the gurgling rivers and magnificent waterfalls to form a wonderful work of Mother Nature. Huangguoshu Waterfalls and the limestone caves are the province's most frequented scenic spots. The 17 ethnic groups living in the picturesque province further colour the land with vivid customs and joyous festivals. It is its natural beauty and culture that make Guizhou a perfect travel destination.

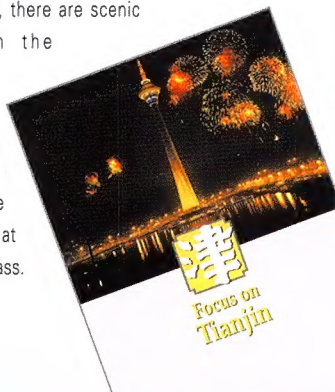


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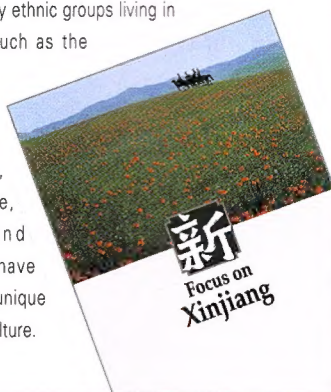
Tianjin, one of the four municipalities under direct Central Government administration, is an important industrial and commercial centre of China and the biggest port in the north. The history of the city can be found in its Ancient Culture Street, 100-year-old Western-style buildings, Opera Museum and Mazu Temple. Besides the TV Tower and the Haihe River in the city, there are scenic spots in the outskirts, including the Dule Temple and the Great Wall at Huangya Pass.



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## Focus on Xinjiang

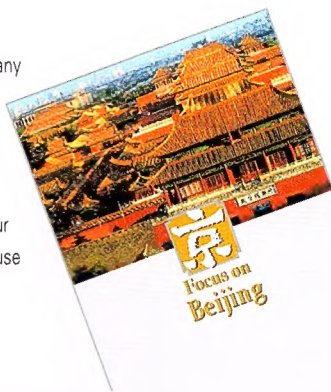
On the vast land of Xinjiang in Northwest China, there are mountains, basins, deserts and lakes, which provide tourists with numerous attractions — ruins of ancient cities and tombs along the Silk Road; Turpan, an oasis in the desert; Kanas Lake, a gem imbedded in the Altay Mountains; Bayanbulak — the Swan Lake; and the world's second largest desert, the Taklimakan. The minority ethnic groups living in Xinjiang, such as the Uygur, Kazak, Mongolian, Uzbek, Tajik, Xibe, Kirgiz and Tatar, all have their own unique colourful culture.



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Beijing is a metropolis of everlasting charm. There are simply too many captivating things to see, to experience and to taste in this grand city with both old glamour and new mobility. There are historical sites such as the Palace Museum (the Forbidden City), the Temple of Heaven, the Summer Palace, and the Ming Tombs; there are also many scenic spots in its outskirts. Recently, tours have been organised for visitors to taste the real Beijing flavour of life — touring the small back lanes, having tea in a traditional-style teahouse and enjoying the Peking Opera.



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## Focus on Shanxi

Shanxi Province, one of the birthplaces of the Chinese civilisation, has impressive ancient architecture and a wealth of well-preserved Buddhist temples, monasteries and grottoes. Among the most famous are the Yungang Grottoes containing some of China's oldest sculptures and Buddhist art, the Yongle Palace, the Jinci Temple, the Hanging Monastery built on a sheer cliff and the Wutai Mountain, one of China's most famous sacred Buddhist lands.



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## Focus on Guangxi

Unusual topography has endowed the province with numerous spectacular karst formations — limestone caves, pinnacles and rocks. The most famous and enchanting scenic spot is Guilin, and the most travelled route, on the Lijiang River from Guilin to Yangshuo. The coastal city of Beihai has the country's largest beach, the Silver Beach. Other attractions include the varied traditional customs of ethnic minorities, the Sino-Vietnamese border area, and the mysterious Huashan cliff paintings.



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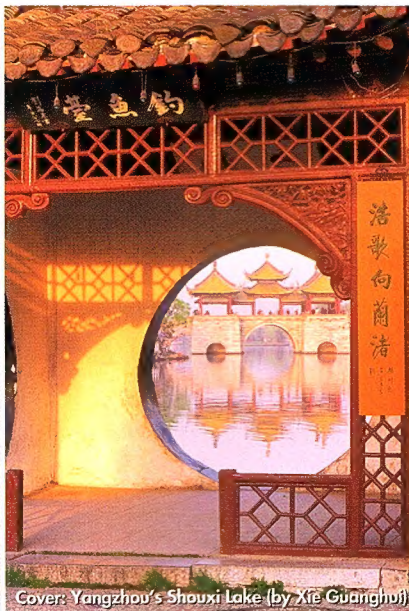
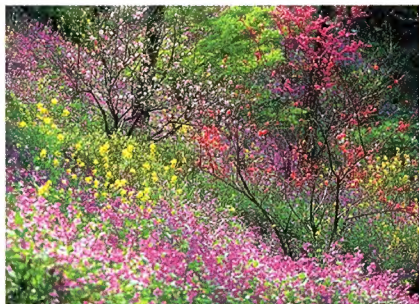
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*Photos & article by Xie Guanghui*

The Yangtse River Delta has long been known as a land of plentiful rice and fish. The Grand Canal dug 1,400 years ago linked it with the Central Plains, providing an efficient channel for both material and cultural exchanges. Along the waterway, quite a few towns, including Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Changzhou, Wuxi and Suzhou, have become favourite tourist destinations. In some of these towns, cruises are available to enable tourists to sail along the waterway in the way that the ancient emperors once did.

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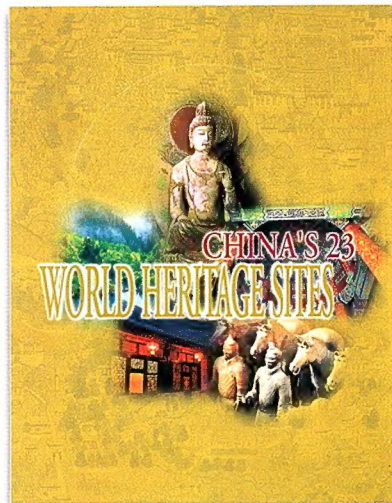
## Food Delights

- 52 Shenzhen: Countrywide Cuisine

*Photos & article by Shi Baoxiu*

As a newly risen metropolis, Shenzhen's majority residents are migrants from other parts of the country, rather than local Guangdong natives. Consequently, restaurants representative of various cooking schools across China have been established. A tour guided by our correspondent leads you to taste the varied dishes: stuffed pancakes of the Northeast, roast lamb and pulao of Xinjiang, dumplings of Shaanxi, hotpot of Chongqing, wild mushrooms of Yunnan, and many others.

# China's 23 World Heritage Sites



Today, more than 580 cultural and natural sites have been placed on UNESCO's World Heritage list. China, one of the world's four ancient civilisations, also has its share of these heritage sites. Up to 1999, 23 sites in the country have been honourably put on the list. These include the Mountain Resort in Chengde, the Temple of Heaven, the Ruins of Zhoukoudian, the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace, the ancient city of Pingyao, Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang, Qin Shihuang's Mausoleum in Xi'an, Wulingyuan, Huanglong, Jiuzhaigou, Mount Emei, the ancient town of Lijiang, Potala Palace, Mount Wudang, Mount Taishan, Confucius' Temple,

Mansion and Cemetery in Qufu, Suzhou Gardens, Mount Huangshan, Mount Lushan, Mount Wuyi and Dazu Rock Carvings.

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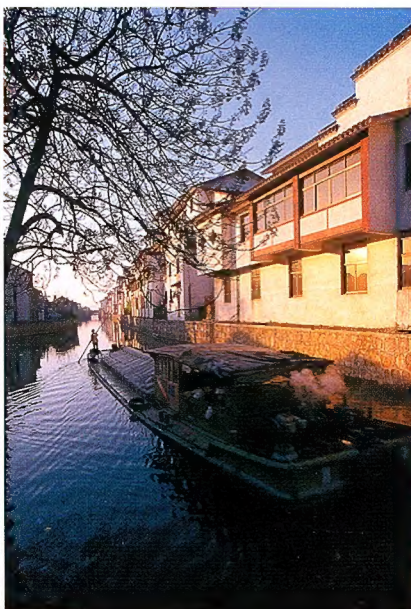
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*Photos by Guo Ji Article by Cheng Mingming*

September and October are the best months for touring the Kanas Lake and other scenic spots in the Altay area in Xinjiang. When autumn dyes some of the trees on the mountain slopes golden and crimson, the firs appear more verdant and the waters more limpid. The carefree herdspeople, their wooden houses, cattle and sheep, fit harmoniously in this beautiful landscape.

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*Article by Dianna Lau*

The grottoes with exquisite stone carvings in the suburbs of Chongqing were added onto the UNESCO Cultural World Heritage List at the end of last year. Collectively known as Dazu Rock Carvings, these art works were hewed into the cliff surface over a long historical period from the Tang to the Qing dynasties. The carvings reflect a wide range of Buddhist themes and the social life of each respective period.

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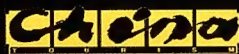
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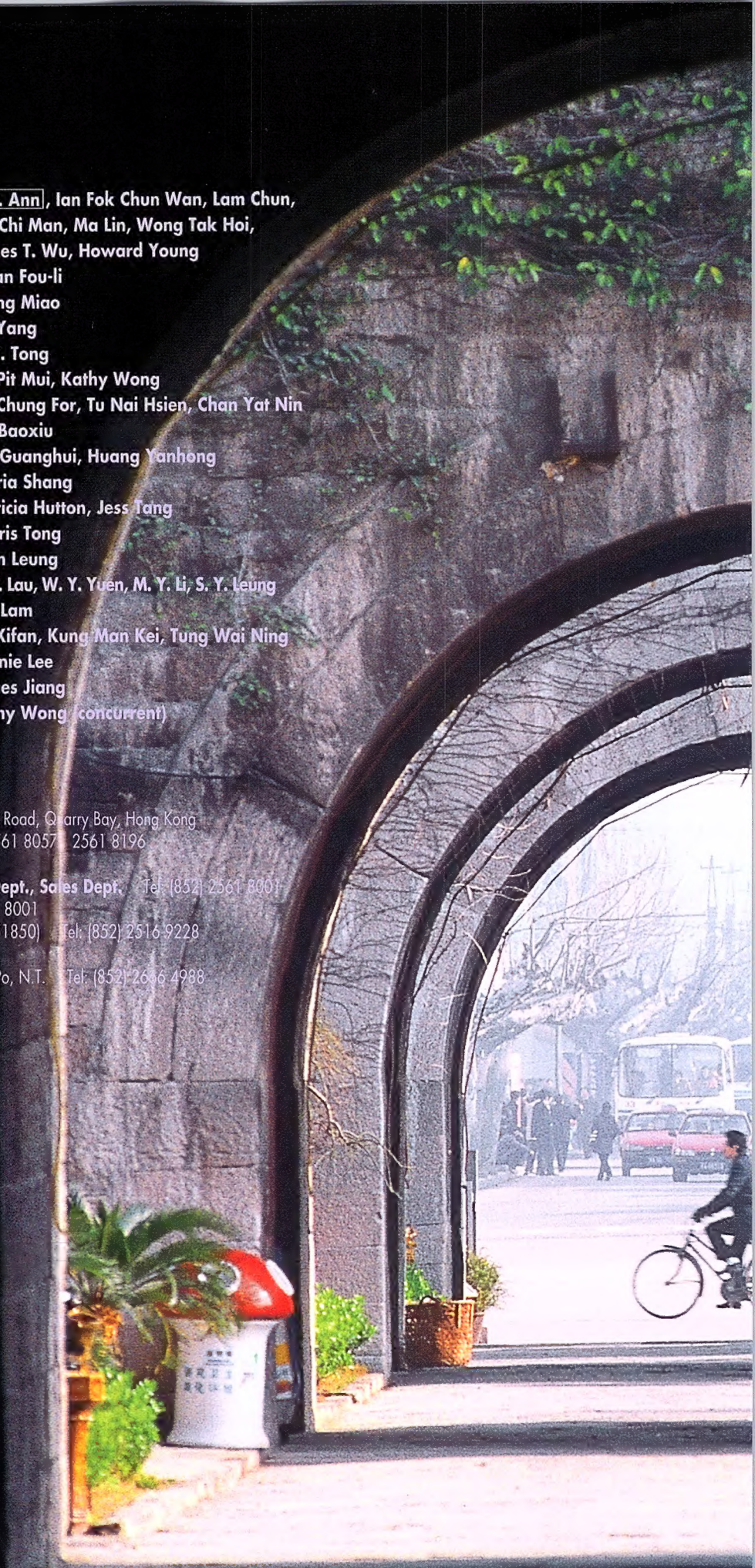
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## CONTRASTING GLAMOUR, EQUAL DELIGHTS

The area of the Yangtse River Delta contains some of the country's most loved travel destinations — the canal towns of southern China. The idyllic atmosphere of these towns has fascinated not only modern tourists, but also Emperor Yangdi of the Sui Dynasty and Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty as well as literary men such as Tang-dynasty poet Li Bai. Ancient visitors showed their praise in poems and articles which serve to continuously bolster the reputation of these "heaven on earth" places. Drifting down the ancient Grand Canal, we unveil the breath-taking views of these pearls in southern China.

On the contrary, the northwestern part of China presents a bold and unconstrained ambience. In Qinghai Province, the friendly and modest Tibetan people, the holy ancient cypress forest, the newly built "Great Wall" and the rustic Tibetan temple all portray a note of unpolished beauty. Whereas in Altay in Xinjiang, the sparkling autumn colours, lofty mountains, placid water and endless grassland bestowed on our reporter a great sense of freedom.

No trip is considered complete without tasting some dainty delicacies. It seems very unlikely that busy city dwellers will travel around the country to try the typical dishes of every area. Now a trip to Shenzhen can realise your gluttonous dreams. Air-dried meat, roasted lamb leg, steamed fish, wild mushrooms, nang, dumplings, buns, soup... Both meat-lovers and vegetarians can eat to their heart's content.

*Photo by Xie Guanghui*

## Ctrip.com: Travel Through Internet

In the age of high technology with the Internet covering every corner of the world, you have more ways to work out a travel plan. Ctrip.com is one such company that can help make your trip easier.

Visiting this website is like visiting a travel agency — except that you can do it any time, sitting at your desk in your office or at home. You can browse the scenic spots at your destination, book your air tickets and hotels, and learn all the tips about eating, shopping and entertainment. If you put in your planned budget and number of days for a certain trip, Ctrip.com will make suggestions within your limits. This will please individual travellers who wish to have some sort of guideline.

Ctrip.com International is an online travel corporation. Since its founding in April 1999, the company has been growing rapidly. Besides its headquarters in Shanghai, the company has also set up offices in Beijing, Guangzhou and Hong Kong. Among its investors are International Data Group, Softbank China Venture Investments, Orchid Asia and Shanghai Industrial Technology Ventures. Neil Shen, chairman and cofounder of Ctrip.com International, is a native of Shanghai who received his Master in Finance from the School of Management at Yale University. He has managerial experience with several international financial institutes in New York and Hong Kong, such as Cyberbank Corporation, Deutsche Bank, Asia Pacific, Chase Manhattan Bank, Lehman Brothers and Citibank.



## Mt. Liupan Forest Park, Ningxia

Mount Liupan in Northwest China's Ningxia has been designated a state forest park. The mountain now boasts 28,000 hectares of forests and 133,000 hectares of pastureland. It is also a world of rich wildlife. There are 788 species of plants, including over 300 medicinal herbs, 213 kinds of wild animals, 900 varieties of insects and 90 species of birds.

The area is dotted with peaks and cut by meandering streams. The pleasantly cool weather makes the place an ideal summer resort. In the old days, both Mongolian rulers, Genghis Khan and Kublai Khan, once took Mount Liupan as their summer resort. Historical sites in the mountain are open to tourists and visitors can stay in the newly built Mongolian yurts and be entertained with performances of Mongolian songs and dances. They can also try recreational activities such as target shooting and horse-riding in the green valleys.

## More State Nature Reserves in Inner Mongolia and Heilongjiang

Four more state-level nature reserves have been designated in northern China. These include the Sanjiang and Qixing River reserves in Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, and the Bayan Oboo and Sayhan Uul reserves in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. The Bayan Oboo Nature Reserve, located in the northwestern part of the Hexigten Grassland, features pastureland. The Sayhan Uul Nature Reserve, with forest, grassland, river and wetland, is for multiple ecological systems.

## Repair Plan for the Great Wall

An ambitious plan to renovate the Great Wall built in the Qin Dynasty has been kicked off in Inner Mongolia. With a grant of US\$72,290 from the State Bureau of Cultural Relics, a section of one km of the Great Wall in the Urad Front Banner will be repaired this year. Local relics authorities will renovate one km each year in the coming five years.

This is the first renovation effort on sections of the Great Wall built over 2,000 years ago. The Qin Great Wall was built to fend off intruders of the northern nomadic tribes. It winds through Hebei, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia and Gansu. More than 200 km of the wall lies in Inner Mongolia, of which a section of 300 metres was repaired last year. The wall is 3.5 metres high, 4.1 metres wide at the bottom and 1.5 metres wide at the top. When the project is completed, the renovated Qin-dynasty Great Wall will open to the public.

Though the Great Wall in China is well known worldwide, few people have ever seen a section of the wall built during the Qin, which was the foundation of the Great Wall built during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The sections open to tourists, such as Shanhaiguan, Badaling and Mutianyu, were mostly built during the Ming and Qing, and have been repaired since 1949.

## Direct Flight Between Munich and Chongqing

Chongqing has become the third city in China to have a direct flight to Munich, Germany, after Beijing and Shanghai. According to the agreement, the German LTU will fly 26 round trips from May to October, one each week. The route was established to open a more convenient channel between the two cities and bring more German visitors to China's Southwest.

## New Marine Park Planned, Hong Kong

A marine park covering 270 hectares of coastal and sea area will be built in Tung Ping Chau, Hong Kong. It will help conserve the rich and diverse marine life in the area, protect breeding grounds for fish stocks and provide opportunities for scientific research.

The seabed of Tung Ping Chau embraces extensive coral formations and a rich growth of seaweed. The fringing coral formation, measuring 1.8 square kilometres, is one of the largest in Hong Kong. It supports at least 124 species of reef fish. Meanwhile, the coastline of Tung Ping Chau, which is characterised with sedimentary rock formations and geological features, is of high scientific and educational value.

Most of the land on Tung Ping Chau has been designated country park since June 1979. The proposed Tung Ping Chau Marine Park is confined to the sea area below the high water mark. A study commissioned by the Hong Kong Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department on the ecological value of the area in 1998 confirmed that it is a suitable site for a marine park.



## Trade Fair to Be Held in Urümqi

From September 1-8 the China Xinjiang Urümqi Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Fair will be held in Urümqi, capital of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The biggest international trade fair in the region, this annual event will bring business opportunities to both domestic and foreign companies. It has been recognised as an important bridge to connect markets in Central Asia with the Northwest of China.

A series of seminars on the development of China's western region will also be held at the fair. It is estimated that more than 800 domestic and foreign enterprises and over 30,000 business people will attend the fair this year.

At the 1999 fair, attended by 33,000 business people from over 40 countries and regions, and 28 Chinese provinces, a total volume of US\$1.2 billion in foreign trade and economic co-operation was reached.



## Rare Historical Books Return Home

A batch of 542 ancient books have been transferred to the Shanghai Library after having been lost for one and a half centuries. Known as the "Weng Collection", the books had been maintained by an insurance company in New York City for at least 50 years.

These books are irreplaceable state treasures. Many of them have never been seen in any library in the world. Seventy-nine of the books, including the block-printed edition of *Ji Yun* from the Song Dynasty, are the only existing copies in the world.

The major part of the collection was accumulated by Weng Tonghe (1830-1904), tutor of Emperor Guangxu of the Qing Dynasty. Weng Wan'ge, the son of Weng Tonghe's great-grandson possessed the collection before it was bought back to China. Through two years of laborious negotiations, in late 1999, China Guardian Auctions Co. obtained the consent of the octogenarian Weng, who agreed to send his ancient editions back to China. About 50 years ago, Weng Wan'ge shipped the collection from Shanghai to the United States as war raged in China. As these volumes remained unknown to the world, the exhibition of the books in 1985 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York amazed academics in history and relics communities worldwide. The Shanghai municipal government finally bought them at a cost of millions of US dollars.

## Food

### Food Street in Quanzhou, Fujian

#### Quanzhou

A food street of traditional Fujian style has been built in Fujian's Quanzhou, providing another choice for gourmets from both home and abroad to savour the great variety of delicacies.

Located at the junction of the old and new sections of downtown Quanzhou, connecting Fengze Street to the north and Jinhui Street to the south, the food street, 613 metres long, has 150 eating places offering a good assortment of typical Quanzhou dishes and snacks. Quanzhou's glutinous rice meat dumplings, Shishi's beef soup, Honglai's chicken claw, Guanqiao's dried bean curd, Shigu's duck soup and Dehua's bitter vegetable soup can now all be tasted at the very same location. The food street buildings are mainly short structures built with rammed earth, wood and bricks modelled on Fujian's ancient residential buildings, thus creating an air of nostalgia.



## Scenic Spot

### Xiaoling Museum Opens to Public

#### Nanjing

At the Zhongshan Mausoleum Scenic Area in the eastern suburbs of Nanjing, the Xiaoling Museum, a brand new museum featuring the relics discovered in the ancient imperial mausoleum, opened to public recently. Its fine collection of ancient relics has attracted flocks of visitors.

This museum of the Ming Dynasty is a key cultural relic under state protection. Its buildings and sculptures are an invaluable national heritage, not mention the great number of historical relics buried underground.

In recent years, archaeologists have discovered or excavated the Dongpei Hall, Imperial Kitchen, Slaughter Pavilion, the base of the Literary and Martial Archways and Bird Pond inside the mausoleum, as well as a giant stone tortoise and a stele with no inscription around the nearby East Mausoleum. Precious relics such as blue tiles of the Six Dynasties period, eave tiles of the Tang and Song, gilded architectural pieces and blue-and-white porcelain of the Ming Dynasty, ancient coins and bricks with inscriptions were also found on the spot. These relics provide references to the studies of the architectural design and techniques, and art development of the Ming Dynasty when the Xiaoling Mausoleum was built.

Xiaoling Museum is divided into the outdoor and indoor sections. The outdoor section includes the Xiaoling Mausoleum and the East Mausoleum, while the indoor exhibition section is found in Anxiang Pavilion next to Meihua (Plum Blossoms) Hill. The museum provides an opportunity for visitors to understand the construction process of an early Ming-dynasty imperial mausoleum, and to admire the grandeur and magnificence of this royal architecture.



## Air Route

### Shanghai-Lhasa Air Route in Operation

#### Shanghai-Lhasa

The Shanghai-Xi'an-Lhasa air route began its operation on March 29. This air route became the first of its kind directly linking East China with Tibet. It shortens the travel time from Shanghai to Lhasa to just one day, saving passengers both time and money. Before the launch of this route, passengers heading from Shanghai to Lhasa had to stay overnight at Chengdu.

This 3,250-km air route is operated by China Southwest Airlines and flying time is four hours and 20 minutes. Passengers have only one hour stopover at Xi'an. The flight departs from Shanghai's Hongqiao Airport every Wednesday and Sunday at 07:50 and arrives at Lhasa's Gonggar Airport at 13:10. The return flight departs from Lhasa every Tuesday and Saturday. The aircraft is a 757-200 with 200 seats.



## Great Cruising on Taihu Lake, Wuxi

The pleasant weather and lively atmosphere in southern China have made it the perfect time to make a trip there. Considering the advantageous location of the Three Kingdoms & the Outlaws of the Marsh City by Taihu Lake, the Wuxi CCTV Film & Television Productions Co. Ltd. in Jiangsu Province designed a golden route for tourists to cruise the lake.

The cruise covers the best section of Taihu Lake. On a luxuriously decorated ancient warship, sightseers will be stunned by the magnificence of the natural and cultural attractions around Taihu Lake. The beautiful hills of Junzhang, Dafozui, Congshan and Tuoshan, in addition to the charming Outer Taihu Lake, also constitute a splendid feast to the eyes. Simply enjoying the tranquility and expanse of Taihu is wonderful enough, not to mention accompanying it with the aroma of a good cup of tea. Historical costumes can also be rented aboard to further enhance the sightseers' delight.

Website

## Xiamen Launched a New Travel Website

Xiamen

The Travel10k.com homepage, featuring travel and culture in China, has been launched recently in Xiamen.

Two hundred million yuan was invested in setting up Travel10k.com. The homepage is specially designed to highlight both cultural and business travel in China. Details of Chinese culture and the country's scenic spots are covered, and practical and effective travel guides are provided.

The simplified Chinese, complex Chinese and English versions of the site are ready. Versions in French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic are under construction.

Using not only words and pictures, but also audio and visual techniques, Travel10k.com includes information on almost 100 tourist cities in China, as well as tips in dining, lodging, transport, sightseeing and shopping. Gathering all the necessary information from the homepage, web users can figure out their very own itinerary. The use of the e-map further increases the practicality of this homepage. Visit the website at [www.travel10k.com](http://www.travel10k.com).

Scenic Spot

## Chi Lin Nunnery: A Cultural Heritage in Hong Kong

Hong Kong

After 10 years of redevelopment, the Tang-dynasty style Chi Lin Nunnery in Diamond Hill, Hong Kong, has officially opened on May 20, 2000. The refurbishment involved an expense of more than HK\$700 million (US\$ 90 million).

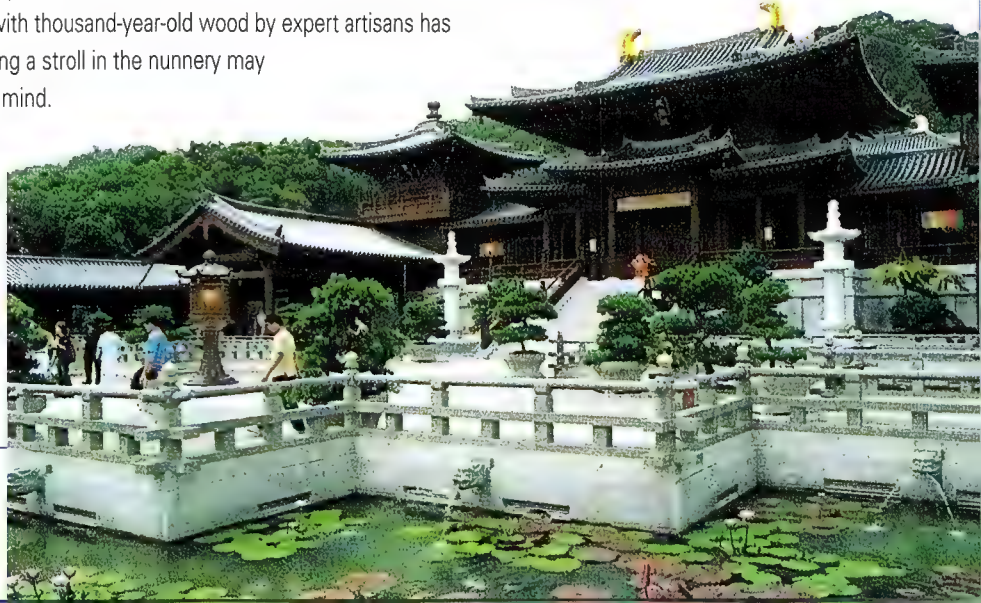
Covering an area of more than 33,000 square metres, Chi Lin Nunnery has 16 halls for religious functions linked with long corridors. At the main entrance of the complex is an extensive garden featuring a lotus pond. Hundred-year-old trees were planted to grace the area. The fact that all the halls are built with thousand-year-old wood by expert artisans has put the nunnery in the spotlight of the world. Having a stroll in the nunnery may drive away your worries and leave you a peaceful mind.

The nunnery also runs a centre and a home for the elderly, and a school. At present it houses more than 400 people, including Buddhist nuns and monks, and the elderly.

Opening hours:

Nunnery: 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. daily except Wednesday

Lotus Pond Garden: 6:30 a.m.-7 p.m. daily



## Hotel

### Regal Shanghai East Asia Hotel Upgraded

**Shanghai** Recently, Regal Shanghai East Asia Hotel has been officially designated a four-star hotel by the National Tourism Bureau.

Located in the southwest of Shanghai's Xuhui commercial area, Regal Shanghai East Asia Hotel is an integrated part of the 80,000-seat Shanghai Stadium, the largest of its kind in Southeast Asia. It has 350 luxurious rooms and several food and beverage outlets including the 24-hour stadium cafe, Chinese restaurant, Japanese restaurant, and Shanghai's first sports bar and restaurant on the hotel's top floor — Top of the World — where customers can enjoy a view of the whole stadium or watch all kinds of games and performances. A meeting and conference centre and a business centre are also available for the convenience of the business travellers.

Regal Shanghai East Asia Hotel is owned by Shanghai East Asia Group and managed by Regal Hotels International Group. Since its opening in October 1997, the hotel has received tremendous positive comments from international business travellers and tourists.

## News

### The Reconstruction of Jianfugong Garden

**Beijing** The Jianfugong Garden in the Forbidden City, which was destroyed by fire 77 years ago, is going to be restored to its former appearance. Built in 1740, the Jianfugong Garden, also known as the West Garden, was an architectural masterpiece combining the styles of both northern and southern Chinese gardens. Occupying an area of 4,020 square metres, the garden was where Emperor Qianlong stored his private collections and feasted his guests. Nevertheless, it was burned down in June 1923, leaving only some pieces of columns and their stone bases.

It is said that when Puyi, the last emperor of the Qing Dynasty, just began to take an inventory of his possessions, fire started at Jingshengzhai, which, together with the Jianfugong Garden, was the imperial treasure house. The nearby Jianfugong Garden soon caught fire. In the disaster, a tremendous amount of invaluable cultural relics were destroyed, including 2,000 Buddhist statues, 1,000 paintings and calligraphic works, 400 curios and numerous ancient books. It is generally believed that the eunuchs had set the fire, trying to conceal the fact that they had been stealing and selling the imperial treasures secretly.

China Heritage Fund of Hong Kong has contributed US\$4 million for the reconstruction. The grand new Jianfugong Garden should be finished in four years.



## Hotel

### Three Sheraton Hotels in Jiangsu

**Jiangsu** It is definitely a pleasant experience to escape the city's hustle and bustle and stay in a peaceful southern China village. The historical relics, the simple lifestyle of the locals and the serene atmosphere will deeply impress you. First-class accommodation in one of the Sheraton Hotel Group's five-star hotels in Jiangsu — Suzhou Wugong Sheraton Hotel, Sheraton Wuxi Hotel and Sheraton Nanjing Kingsley Hotel — will surely enhance this romantic trip. Aiming to provide an upscale and modern stopover for visitors in Jiangsu, all of them boast convenient transportation connected by railway or expressway.

Of these three, Suzhou Wugong Sheraton Hotel is distinctive for its building style blending the essence of ancient architecture with gardens. Every guestroom there has a share of the pleasant view of either the hotel's three harmoniously-blended landscaped gardens in different styles, or the adjacent Gusu Garden.

The rooms of these three Sheraton hotels are all equipped with safes, IDD telephone services, personal computer sockets, satellite TV, iron and ironing board, and round-the-clock room service and baby-sitting services. Business and convention facilities are also offered for the convenience of business travellers.

The hotels are managed by Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc. which owns more than 7,000 hotels and resorts in 80 countries. For further information, please contact Starwood's world reservation centre, the reservation department of each hotel, or simply visit the website: [www.sheraton.com](http://www.sheraton.com).



**O**n this regular page we include letters and comments received from our readers. We welcome and value all suggestions, praise, criticism and questions from our readers anytime. Please post, fax or E-mail your letters and comments to us (details at the bottom of this page).

## LETTERS

Your April issue, focusing on Xinjiang, is especially good. Its message is clear and the area is defined both in the text and in a good-sized map.

Of special interest is the article with well-taken photographs on power generation by wind. This shows a great step forward in pollution control and tremendous economy in producing the power so urgently needed in developing China's western regions.

A friend from the United States was visiting when the issue arrived and was so impressed with it that she was happy to take two of my back issues away with her.... Keep up the good work!

A Regular Reader  
Beijing

Thank you for presenting an unusual feature on the Bon religion in Tibet. I was one of many people who had never heard of it, and wrongly I now know, assumed the only religion there was Buddhism. I hope you will have more stories like this one.

There seems to be, however, a discrepancy in the age of the founder of the Bon religion, Tonpa Shenrab. Early in the story you mention that Bon followers believe their religion was founded 18,000 years ago by Tonpa Shenrab, yet later on you mention a 2,000-year-old tree allegedly planted by him. So, did he live a very, very long life or did you make a mistake?

D. Lemay  
Montreal, Canada

### Editor's Note:

We apologise for the seeming discrepancy which should have been explained in the story. According to the author, it is not unusual in the Bon religion to give a historic or semi-historic religious master an additional, much older mythical identity. The Bon religious tradition says that Tonpa Shenrab lived 18,000 years ago; this however is a mythical date and just indicates the great age of the man. There are several semi-historic indications that about 2,000 years ago, during the time of the 9th Yarlung king, a great Bonpo master believed to be Tonpa Shenrab, came from the homeland of Bon in present-day Ngari, Tibet, to central Tibet to restore the religion. This is most likely the correct version.

I have noticed that you sometimes present stories on the same place in issues that are only several months apart. One example is Sayram Lake, covered in Issues 237 and 229. I'd prefer that you show us more different places.

S. Tam  
Hong Kong

### Editor's Note:

Sometimes we try to give readers different perspectives on the same place by including stories by our own reporters and by our readers or independent travellers. In Issue 229's Sayram Lake story, an American woman shared the experience of her tour in the area with a group of Westerners, while in Issue 237, the focus of our reporter was more on the Mongolian herdspeople who live in the area of the lake.

Please send your letters to:

Hong Kong China Tourism Press, English Department, 24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong. Fax: (852) 2561 8057, 2561 8196 E-mail: edit-e@hkctp.com.hk

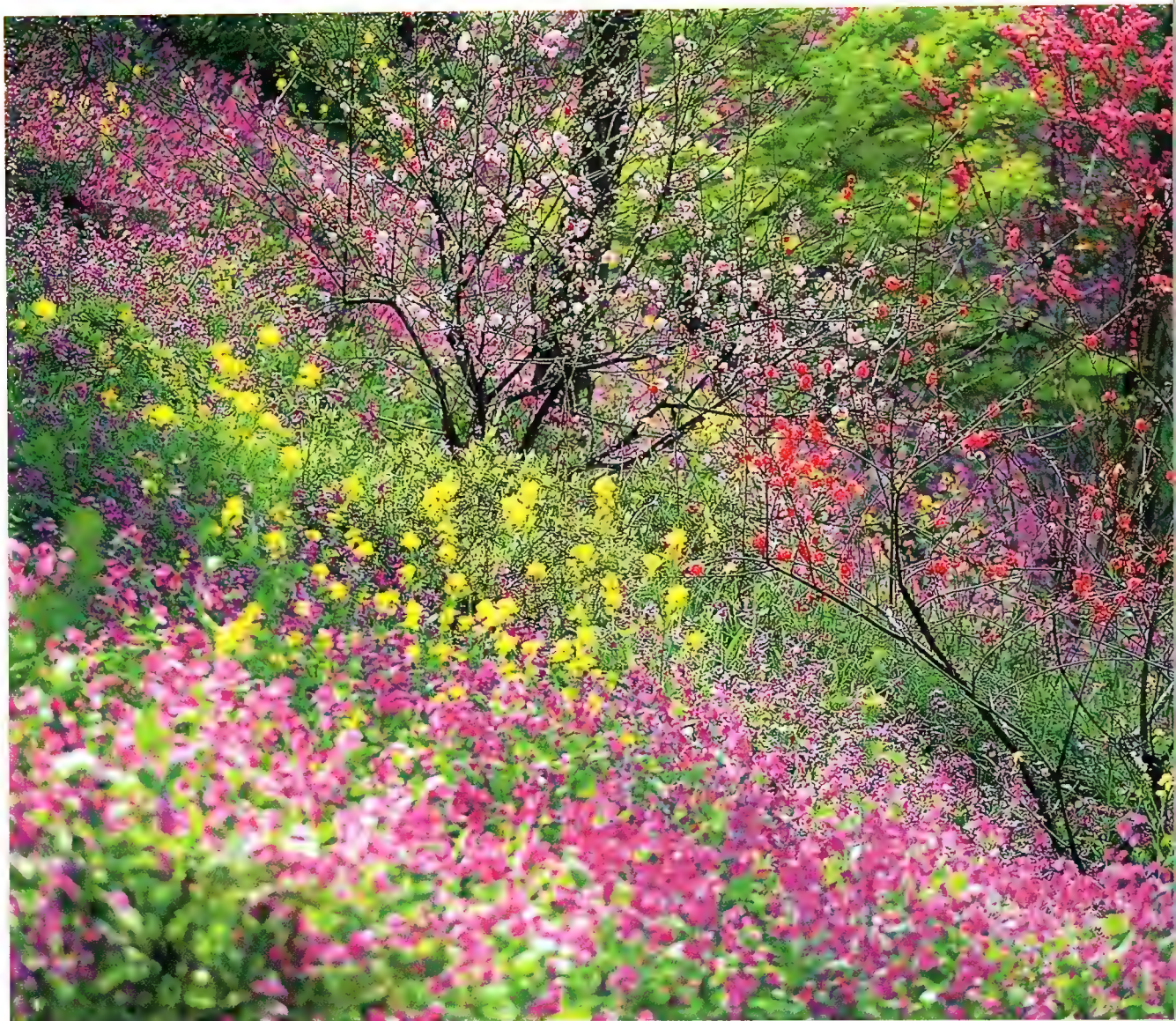
FEATURE STORY



The background of the entire page is a vibrant, painterly illustration of a canal scene. In the foreground, a calm body of water reflects the sky and the surrounding foliage. The water is a pale, shimmering blue. On the left bank, a large, gnarled tree with thick, reddish-brown bark stands prominently. Its branches are covered in dense green leaves. To its right, a cluster of trees with bright yellow and orange foliage is visible. In the background, more trees with pink and red blossoms are scattered across the landscape. The sky is a soft, hazy blue with wispy white clouds. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and scenic, typical of a traditional Chinese garden or park.

# JIANGSU'S FAMOUS CANAL TOWNS

Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Changzhou, Wuxi, Suzhou



Photos & article by  
Xie Guanghui

# YANGZHOU

## Where Spring Blooms in March

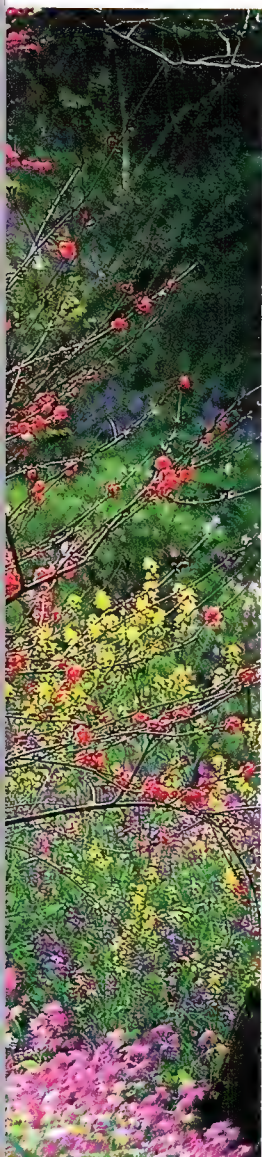
The morning mist hangs low over the river. The *Qianlong*, a replica of a Qing pleasure boat under a richly ornamented canopy, makes a sharp turn, triggering off a succession of ripples that spread out like a huge fan opening and hit the stone bank. The lawns stretch back from the shore, while the luxuriant weeping willows sway in a gentle breeze. It is March in Yangzhou. There is still a mild chill in the spring wind, but it doesn't bother the passengers, who chat and laugh in between sips of the Biluochun tea just harvested from the Eastern Mountain on the Taihu Lake. The boat follows the route of the



"Cruise of Emperor Qianlong", from downtown to the Shouxi (Slender West) Lake along a river that flows through a landscape beautified by terraces, towers and pavilions.

### World's Longest Canal

Qing emperor Qianlong (r.1738-1796) had to thank Emperor Yangdi of the Sui Dynasty (581-618) for making his boat visits to



Yangzhou possible. In 604, the newly crowned Sui emperor ordered the construction of the Grand Canal. This 1,794 km waterway that began in Beijing and ended in Hangzhou, passing through Tianjin, Hebei, Shandong, Jiangsu and Zhejiang and crossing the Haihe, Yellow, Weihe, Yangtse and Qiantang rivers, was completed in six years of Herculean effort from millions of labourers. The canal was the greatest water conservancy feat ever undertaken in ancient China; today, it remains the world's longest canal and plays a pivotal role in shipping, diverting floods and irrigating the fields in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces. Emperor Yangdi's three extravagant tours of Yangzhou aboard luxury dragon-and-phoenix boats along the canal, however, were as much hated as Yangdi himself for being one of China's licentious emperors. For his debauched life he was eventually hanged in his Yangzhou palace by rebel generals. His remains were buried at Leipo Village in Yangzhou's northern suburbs.

A few years ago, I went to Leipo Village for a look at Yangdi's tomb. I saw no stone statues, pavilions enshrined with his epitaph, divine way, or even ancient cypress trees. There was simply a tiny, lonely mound in the fields with only a stone tablet inscribed with the four Chinese

characters "Tomb of Sui Emperor Yangdi", to mark the spot.



### Three Knives of Yangzhou

On arriving in Yangzhou a taxi driver told me of the local peoples' love for tea houses in the morning and public baths at night. This reminded me of the English habit of afternoon tea and the Japanese habit of bathing in a hot spring. My days in Yangzhou seemed destined to have a soothing effect on my mind and body. Indeed, my fatigue soon dissolved in the carefree and leisured local life.

#### The Cleaver and Local Cuisine

In the mornings, the Fuchun Teahouse is intensely crowded. Waiters, wearing white overalls and holding brass kettles with long spouts, make solicitous rounds. Sun rays penetrate the latticed windows, tossing a motley of patterns on the square tables by the windows. Each table, painted the colour of water chestnut, is laid out with steaming buns, cured bean-curd slices and a tea set. Wisps of vapour curl up and disappear. I spoke with Zhang Xiaowei, 49, a regular patron. He did a stint as a chef abroad and in Hong Kong; now he is the principal of a local cooking school. He tapped at the bamboo steamers of stuffed buns. "Delicacies like this can be found only in Yangzhou, though Chinese food of various styles is popular all over southeast Asia," he said. "Don't overlook this Sanding (Three Cubic) bun. The stuffing is made of minced shrimp, chicken and bamboo shoots, and it is so tasty that even Emperor Qianlong could not help liking it. The Feicui (Jadeite) buns with translucent wrappers that have a green shine are filled with tender cabbage and topped with minced ham."



The Hua'an-Yangzhou cuisine originated in Yangzhou has become one of the four major culinary schools of China not only for its innovative simmering, brewing and grilling techniques that preserve the original flavours, but also because of its impeccable use of the cleaver. The cured bean-curd slices, for instance, are cut as fine as hair, with the skilled use of the cleaver. Though a simple cold dish, they serve as an appetiser of a sumptuous banquet, much like the prelude to a concert.

- Previous page: March is the best time to admire the spring scenery at Shouxi Lake
1. The brilliant blossoms in Yangzhou Park announce the coming of spring.
  2. Flowers are everywhere in Yangzhou in March and April.
  3. A local man doing his morning exercises at Shouxi Lake
  4. A Yangzhou chef demonstrating his skill in cutting cured bean curd



### Moonlit Nights at Shouxi Lake

Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) fared much better than Yangdi, sailing to Yangzhou on six occasions during his 60-year reign without incurring much public wrath. He would start his tour right after the Lantern Festival, with a large retinue of courtesans and generals in tow. Along the way, he would pay homage to the God of Mount Taishan in Tai'an, Shandong Province, visit Confucius' hometown of Qufu, and offer sacrifices and libations for the God of Rivers before crossing the Yellow River. Then, after an uncomfortable, bumpy trip in his

horse-drawn carriage, he would sail southward along the Grand Canal luxuriating in the comforts of his imperial boat. While in one of his poetic moods, he wrote, "In the early morning I unleashed my carriage and let it go back along the Qin post road; At sunset my imperial boat was already dropping anchor at Yangzhou." It was usually March when Qianlong arrived at Yangzhou. To please him, local officials and salt merchants spent copiously on landscaped gardens along the canal.

After our boat sailed by Yechun Garden and turned north at the Western Garden, the river widened considerably, and a long dike

appeared to the west, where willow trees flaunted their greenery and peach trees unfolded a riot of pink flowers. The serenity of this Slender West Lake had an uplifting effect on every passenger. We alighted at the Western Garden and took a stroll along a pebble-paved path amongst the intricate cluster of pavilions, terraces, waterfront kiosks, lotus ponds, flowers, trees and bamboo, and rockery, all picturesquely arranged.

We resumed our cruise, passing the Honglan Bridge to arrive at Minor Golden Hill. This hill was made with earth dug out of the river around it to allow Emperor Qianlong's imperial boat direct access to the Pingshan Hall. A stone stairway took us to the hilltop for a nice view of the surroundings — the Rainbow Bridge in the south, the Evergreen Bridge in the north, and the Chunpo Bridge and the Wuting (Five-Pavilion) Bridge right in front of us. On a rainy day these four bridges hide behind a thickening mist in a surreal scene showing the beauty of southern China. According to Zhu Ziqing, a modern author and native of Yangzhou, the hill was an ideal place to view the river, as well as the moon. His "Lotus Pond under the Moon" is an impressive account of the moonlit scene there.

1. Yechun Restaurant at night
2. The Twenty-Four Bridges Scenic Area of Shouxi Lake
3. Minor Golden Hill was made with earth dug out to build the water access for Emperor Qianlong's boat.
4. Replicas of ancient emperors' boats now serve tourists on Shouxi Lake.
5. Professional services are provided in Yangzhou bathhouses.
6. Shaving — the Yangzhou way
7. A barber at work



## Three Knives of Yangzhou

### Pedicure Cutter with Great Skill

Yang Fan, a 38-year-old native of Puxi in the suburbs of Yangzhou, has been a masseur in a Yangzhou public bath for over 20 years. He agreed that, besides loving food, Yangzhou people are fastidious about their bathing. "During a massage, we make sure that every limb is completely attended to, and every joint makes a nice sound. When you massage someone's back, you cannot merely use your arms and wrists — it is the strength of your palms and fingers that count. Flexibility enables you to clean the skin while also making the customer comfortable. This is something you cannot master overnight."

Pedicurists all have a collection of "knives", each of which serves a particular purpose. Through their skillful handling of these "scalpels", they treat all kinds of foot problems.

Many people suffer inflammation of their cuticles. This may come from ill-fitting shoes or incorrect cutting of the toenails, which makes the nails grow inwards. Doctors treat this with antibiotics or by pulling the nails out. In a public bath in Yangzhou, you soak your foot in hot water for five minutes and the pedicurist treats your ingrown nails. If treated once a week, you can be cured in a month.

### Hair Cutting and Head Shaving

Changgui, a hairdresser in his 60s, is upset by the fact that so many people confuse head shaving with hair cutting. According to him, head shaving is a habit of the Manchus that is alien to the Han people, who believe that "hair and skin are gifts from the parents, and therefore should not be hurt". In ancient times the Han people cherished their hair dearly. It was not until Emperor Shunzhi of the Qing Dynasty issued the edict that, within 10 days, all men should have the front part of their head shaved and make the rest of their hair into a pigtail. The shaving had to be done every two months, and those who violated the rule were executed without mercy. That is to say, you kept either your head or your hair.

In the early Qing days, the barber's blunt knives made a head shaving something of an ordeal. During the third emperor's reign, a Yangzhou Taoist priest in Beijing's Baiyun Temple invented razors, face scrapers, ear cleaners and eye cleansers, as well as a series of cosmetic massages. When the imperial eunuchs acquired these tools and skills, Emperor Yongzheng was so impressed that he bestowed the Taoist priest with an imperial title. The tools and skills were soon popularised and the priest is thus adored as the forefather of Chinese barbers.

The elderly barbers of Yangzhou are skilled in plaiting, hair cutting, shaving, ear cleaning, nose hair cutting, eyebrow trimming, and so on. Some even know how to treat broken bones.





### Anglers' Terraces Not for Fishing

Our boat left Minor Golden Hill, sailed north a while, then west, and into new vistas. At the end of a willow-covered dike I saw a pavilion known as Diaoyutai, or Anglers' Terrace. Places with this name are a dime a dozen, but in most cases the name falls short of reality. The Diaoyutai in Beijing turns out to be the State Guest House. The one on the Fuchun River in Zhejiang is perched on a high mountain, where angling is an improbable proposition. The Diaoyutai by Panxi Stream of Shaanxi is a boulder where the legendary Lord Jiang was said to have fished, but the water there is too pure for fish

to survive. The "Rhapsody of Diaoyutai" composed by Wang Shizhen hits the nail on the head: "What you fish for at the Weishui River is personal gain; whereas by the Tongjiang River, you fish for fame." By comparison, the pavilion of Yangzhou's Diaoyutai more closely fits

its name. Three of the terrace's moon gates open onto the river, and the place is so well shaded from the sun and the rain that you can fish there anytime you want. The terrace itself is not only a scenic place, but also provides a picturesque view of the surroundings. You can see the Five-Pavilion Bridge from the western moon gate, whereas the southern moon gate offers an outline view of the White Pagoda in the distance. These two scenes form a most elegant picture that takes on a magic touch if observed at sunset.

### Five-Pavilion Bridge: A City Emblem

The Five-Pavilion Bridge is an emblem of Yangzhou, and is found on many souvenirs. This bridge, built by local salt merchants to please Emperor Qianlong, is comparable to a similar scene in Beijing's Beihai Park. Indeed, the bridge, which has five pavilions with golden-glazed rooftops linked by stone bridges, shows the influence of the Five-Dragon Bridge in Beihai Park. However, in the absence of an open expanse of water, the design was modified to combine pavilions with bridges in a masterly stroke. The White Pagoda is also an imitation of its namesake in Beihai Park. While Beihai's looks monastic with a big belly and a slender top, the one in Yangzhou is a well-proportioned structure that accentuates the scenic beauty of the environment. Between the Five-Pavilion



Bridge and the White Pagoda, a white marble balustrade surrounds the Xichun Terrace.

The scenic sections of the Slender West Lake can be divided into two — from the Rainbow Bridge to Minor Golden Hill and the Diaoyutai to Five-Pavilion Bridge. Interestingly, the Xichun Terrace, and the Minor Golden Hill are both situated where the lake changes direction, indicating the tasteful genius of Yangzhou garden builders.

### Yangzhou — Qianlong's Favourite

Xichun Terrace was built for Yangzhou officials and salt merchants to celebrate Emperor Qianlong's birthday. The roof has glazed cylindrical tiles, with two gilded dragons on its ridges and corners ornamented with sculptures of animals and dragon heads, which recapture the grandeur of the turrets of Beijing's Forbidden City. The interior of the building is furnished with Yangzhou lacquerware, one of which is the *Jade Maidens Playing the Vertical Flute*, a lacquered mosaic portraying a group of Tang-dynasty female musicians, singers and dancers in action.

The terrace's top floor provides a grand view of the Slender West Lake, with its waves lapping the Five-Pavilion Bridge in the east and the Twenty-Four Bridges floating like ribbons to the north. Emperor Qianlong visited Yangzhou every time on his southern tour. The last time when he was in Yangzhou in his 60s, he wrote: "Learning the abundance of scenic spots in southern China, I have my fine steeds prepared for my spring tour. Tomorrow I will sail down the canal one more time, Again my destination will be the Twenty-Four Bridges in Yangzhou."

Translated by Ling Yuan

1. Five-Pavilion Bridge — an emblem of Yangzhou
2. An exquisitely built hall at Shouxi Lake
3. A gorgeous jade carving, which has landscapes, pavilions, human figures, plants and flowers all in one
4. Carving the patterns on a lacquer vase
5. Artisans working together on a lacquer screen

## Two Treasures of Yangzhou

### Yangzhou Jade Carvings

Jade has long been treasured in China. It was used as currency in ancient times. Today, an intricately carved piece of jade can become unusually valuable.

Large numbers of jade talismans, ornaments, rings, bracelets and pendants have been dug up from



Han tombs near Yangzhou, attesting to the fact that jade carving is a time-honoured craft there. Yangzhou people take immense pride in the monumental jade carving, *Yu the Great Harnessing the Unruly River*, on display in Beijing's Palace Museum. This piece of jade, 2.24 metres high, 0.96 metres wide and weighing over five tons, was quarried from the Kunlun Mountains of Xinjiang in the Qing Dynasty. Hundreds of horses and nearly 1,000 men transported it 4,000 km to Beijing, where it was loaded on a boat and shipped to Yangzhou along the Grand Canal. Then it took seven years for Yangzhou's skilled artisans to turn it into China's largest jade carving in 1787.

At the Yangzhou Jade Carving Factory, I saw a dozen or so workers immersed in their work. One middle-aged man was working on a piece of jade for a Singaporean merchant. He took great care to preserve the natural shape of the piece as he carved a series of figures, landscape, pavilions, terraces, and trees, flowers and grass. I was amazed by the way he manoeuvred a tiny chisel to bring out all the minute details. He cleverly emphasised the natural hues of the jade while at the same time camouflaged its flaws.

### Yangzhou Lacquerware

The Yangzhou Lacquerware Factory stands not far from the Jade Carving Factory. The raw material for this handicraft is a kind of natural lacquer that is highly adhesive and resistant to acids and alkalis. A variety of carving and painting skills are employed to produce a long line of objects of art. More than 10,000 pieces of lacquerware have been found in the local Han tombs. During the Tang Dynasty, Yangzhou lacquerware was given as a tribute to the imperial palace. Thus, you can imagine, among Imperial Lady Yang's collection of treasures, there was no shortage of lacquerware from Yangzhou.

In the workshop, workers first shape their products by pasting kemp fabric and lacquer mortar on wooden or clay moulds. Then, as many as 200 layers of lacquer are applied to the body removed from the mould. Vases mostly feature bright red bottoms, and their contours are outlined. Lacquer not covered by painted lines is scraped away and the void is filled with colour to render a three-dimensional effect. The production of a red lacquer screen calls for lineage, bas-relief, and round carving techniques to produce patterns with depth that are both smooth and bright. In the factory's display room I saw a pair of giant vases carved in red lacquer, typical of Yangzhou lacquerware.

Small wonder the first gift Jiangsu Province gave to Macao to mark the establishment of the special administrative region government on December 20,

1999 was a lacquerware produced in Yangzhou. It consists of five peony flowers made from jadeite, coral and agate against a red lacquer background.





Photos & article  
by Ling Yin

## ZHENJIANG

### Temples and Pufferfish

In my childhood in Hangzhou, I used to listen to storytellers sitting on the long benches of the Lakeside Park on hot summer evenings. One ancient myth was about the White Snake.

It says a white snake saved by a scholar named Xu Xian became a woman and married him to repay his kindness. Monk Fa Hai from the Jinshan (Golden Hill) Temple in Zhenjiang determined that by marrying this woman, Xu Xian was possessed by evil spirits, so he lured him to the temple and hid him. The White Snake ordered prawn and crab soldiers from the sea to flood the temple but she was

eventually defeated by the monk and buried under the temple's Leifeng Pagoda.

#### Zhenjiang's Version of the Story

The Zhenjiang people have their own myth about the White Snake. Monk Fa Hai learned Buddhism on Mount Lushan and then took a boat downstream along the Yangtse River. At Zhenjiang, he saw a deserted temple and heard that an evil white snake in the cliff cave often came out to hurt pilgrims and visitors. Monk Fa Hai valiantly fought the snake and drove it back to the East Sea. While Fa Hai was restoring the temple he discovered gold by the riverbank. So the hill was named Golden Hill, and the temple, Golden Hill Temple. The cave is now called Fa Hai Cave.

#### A Former Yangtse River Island

The Golden Hill, from a distance, seems completely covered with temple buildings, with one almost indistinguishable from the other.



Gazing around at the temple's main gate, I realised that something was different. In general, temples stand facing south, but this one faces west. An old monk explained that in ancient times, the Golden Hill was an island in the Yangtse River and people could stand on the hill looking towards the river flowing down from the west to the east. Tang poet Zhang Gu's verse describes the Golden Hill Temple at the time: "Water flows under the tree shadows, while bells are heard on the banks." Later, the river's main course moved northward, and sediment was deposited between the southern bank and the island. About a century ago, the Golden Hill became part of the south bank.

After passing through the Heavenly King Hall, I arrived at the main hall, the Mahavira Hall. A statue of Sakyamuni sits in the centre of the hall on a lotus flower treasure seat. Sunshine penetrated the windows, casting its rays all over the ground, while the incense filled the hall with an irritating scent. A few dozen monks sat on round cushions, reciting Buddhist scriptures to the rhythmic beating of a bell by a senior monk. The nearby Xizhao (Evening Sunshine) Pavilion houses seven imperial stone tablets, which record Emperor Qianlong's praise of the Golden Hill and his determination to continue the rule of the Qing Dynasty.

The Cishou (Mercy and Longevity) Pagoda stands on the top of the Golden Hill. Ascending to the top floor of the pagoda via a wooden spiral ladder, I found I had a wonderful panoramic view of the city and river. I could see how Zhenjiang and Yangzhou are separated by the Yangtse River, which becomes wide here and seems to be flowing across the sky. This sight stimulated a delightful memory of a poem written by the famous Tang-dynasty poet Li Bai:

"At the Yellow Crane Tower in the west, I left my friend.

In the misty and flowery March, I'm on my way to Yangzhou.

Far on the edge of the blue sky, I see the shadow of a solitary sail.

There is nothing else but the Yangtse River flowing in from the afar."

1. Monks leaving the Mahavira Hall after prayers
2. Ganlu Temple of Zhenjiang
3. The Jiaoshan Temporary Palace on an isle in the Yangtse River
4. The Yuan-dynasty pagoda in the old town of Zhenjiang





## The Rules for Eating Pufferfish

When I passed by the hotel restaurant on my return, a tank full of fish, prawns and crabs immediately caught my attention.

"Do you want to taste the pufferfish?" a voice sounded in my ears. The restaurant manager was trying to entice me to taste one of the most poisonous fish in the sea. Just the name of the fish startled me. Long ago fish markets had a big poster with large characters warning everyone that the ovaries, blood and liver of this fish were extremely poisonous. The markets were forbidden to sell this fish and the public was asked to report anyone suspected of selling it.

The pufferfish were swimming like submarines at the bottom of the tank. The fish has a round head and small mouth, and to me, looks quite foolish. It does not look threatening at all. This fish can temporarily blow itself up like a balloon to scare away potential predators, hence its name.

"Isn't the pufferfish poisonous?" I asked. The manager replied, looking quite proud of himself, that it is, but it depends very much on the skill of the cook. In Yangzhong, a town east of Zhenjiang, people customarily eat this fish.

But who would dare risk eating the fish? Here, it is a little bit safer because the cook would eat the first mouthful in front of the customers. It has become a custom that people dining together would not serve the fish to others nor would they talk about it, in case somebody is poisoned. There is a local rule: Before tasting the pufferfish, the diner has only one chopstick. If that person wants to eat the fish, he or she has to take another chopstick. This means that you make the choice yourself. Another custom is that each diner places a penny on the table to indicate that he or she pays for it.

## Careful Preparation in a Special Kitchen

Some deaths from eating pufferfish have occurred in Yangzhong when the fish was cooked by people who were not local. Once, a couple from Heilongjiang saw many fish eggs in front of a restaurant. Thinking how expensive a dish they were

back home, they took them. When the dish was cooked, the wife decided to buy wine to go with it. By the time she returned, her husband was dying.

The manager of the restaurant saw my hesitation, so he informed me that he had invited a cook from Yangzhong and that the restaurant has a special kitchen for cooking pufferfish. I followed him to the kitchen where we found the only cook there, Mr. Fang. He picked up two fish, one male and one female, each about half a kilogram. He cut the fish with a pair of scissors and took out the viscera and eggs but left the testicles. He removed the eyes and washed the fish under running water.

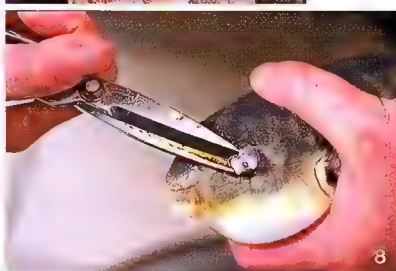



"You can't eat the eggs, but the testicles are all right. Fish eyes are not poisonous but they may contain blood, so for safety's sake it's better to remove them." Mr. Fang put the viscera, eggs and eyes in a special bucket to be burned in the boiler room later. He peeled off the skin. He said the skin, though poisonous, is a kind of traditional Chinese

medicine for treating stomach diseases.

## A Risky Taste Test

The pufferfish is first fried in an iron



wok, then put in an earthen pot with ginger and water. After boiling a couple of minutes, the dish is simmered for about two hours. Spring onions are added just before it is done. When the fish was brought to our table, the soup was still boiling and the hall filled with a sweet scent. Mr. Fang ladled out some soup and sipped. He then smiled, giving us a help-yourself gesture, and left in a gentleman's style. We all looked at each other, and slowly dipped our chopsticks into the fish dish. I felt both excited and nervous, as if stealing the forbidden fruit. 

*Translated by M. Q.*

1. Temple buildings cover up almost the whole Golden Hill.
2. In a suburban park of Zhenjiang in March
3. The last step in the making of Zhenjiang vinegar — sunning
4. Zhenjiang vinegar is an important export product of Zhenjiang.
5. Pufferfish, though poisonous, makes a delicious dish.
6. Steamed bun with juicy stuffing is a famous local snack.
- 7-8. The chef carefully preparing the pufferfish



Photos & article  
by Ge Ling

# CHANGZHOU

## Home of Bamboo Combs

As the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal meanders its way southward into the city of Changzhou, it becomes a web of waterways that pumps life into every nook and cranny of the city in the same fashion as blood flows into the heart of a man. Tucked away on the northern bank of the confluence of the Grand Canal and the South Canal is Biji (Comb) Lane, the famous comb

producer. Its name came from one of its products, *biji*, a kind of comb made of bamboo, which has more teeth than wooden ones.

When our ancestors became *Homo erectus* and needed to coil their once disheveled hair into buns on their heads, combs were invented and eventually became a trademark of the Chinese civilisation in its earliest days. Even today, our morning preparations involve combing our hair before going out to face the challenges of daily life.

The Chinese were perhaps the first in the world to use combs. The ivory combs found in early Shang (c. 16-11th century B.C.) ruins in Zhengzhou were already marked by fine craftsmanship. The semi-circular wooden combs uncovered from a tomb of the Warring States (475-221 B.C.) at Paima Mountain in Hubei's Jiangling, were finished with coloured lacquer. Combs grew in



diversity during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). In the Dunhuang murals, donators are depicted wearing gold and silver combs imbedded with pearls, jade and other precious stones, or gold-plated hardwood combs. We have no idea whether these combs were made in Changzhou, but one thing is for sure: in the late Qing Dynasty, the Empress Dowager Cixi had her long hair dressed with bamboo combs made in Changzhou. One such comb is still kept in the Palace Museum of Beijing. After the Manchu rule of the Qing Dynasty was toppled during the 1911 Revolution, men shed their long pigtailed, and women began to wear their hair short. With

1. The Grand Canal running through Changzhou
2. Qu Qiubai Memorial Museum at 102 Yanling Road West
3. The newly renovated banks of the Grand Canal
4. Tianning Temple



Western influence making inroads into China, hairdressing salons appeared and people no longer had to cut hair themselves. With the pace of life intensifying daily, young people's hairstyles are becoming increasingly simpler. All these cut considerably into the sales of

bamboo combs. So what is life like in Biji Lane today?

### Luxury Bamboo Combs

Among Biji Lane's grey-bricked houses is the Changzhou Bamboo Comb Factory. Inside, workers were painting colourful flowers, insects and birds, figures and landscapes on combs. An old worker was etching a giant panda into a comb handle, his electric iron sizzling and smoking, as a delicate scent drifted above a cobweb of curved lines on the comb. The combs made here can be as large as bananas, or as small as jujubes. A wooden comb requires 28 procedures, while a bamboo comb needs 72. Changzhou artists are choosy about their materials — only bamboo stalks over four years old from

Yixing of Jiangsu, Wuhu of Anhui and Changxing of Zhejiang are used. The stalks must be from the northern side of a mountain, which indicates a hard resilient texture. Precious woods, such as *nanmu*, mahogany, jujube wood and Chinese littleleaf box, are used for wooden combs.

In the factory's display room I saw a portrait of He Lian and Huang Pu, who invented wooden combs; and a painting of Chen Qizi, who created bamboo combs in Changzhou. Two glass cabinets show the medals and certificates of honour the factory has won over the years, along with the many high-grade combs it has invented. These include wooden combs carved with images of the 12 beauties of Jinling, combs made in the images of the gods of fortune, officialdom and longevity, and wooden combs with characters in the *Western Chamber*. Another set of combs is finely crafted in combinations of various materials, including Chinese littleleaf box wood, which can activate the nerves in the scalp and thus is believed to help lengthen a person's life.



### Tianning Temple: Domain of Chan Sect

The Tianning Temple in Changzhou was built during the Zhenguan and Yonghui reigns (627-655) of the Tang Dynasty, and is known as one of the four major domains of the Chan Sect of Chinese Buddhism along with the Jinshan Temple of Zhenjiang, Gaowen

Temple of Yangzhou, and Tiantong Temple of Zhejiang. The Tianning Temple, however, is the only one of the four situated in a downtown area. During Spring Festival, local people flock to the temple at Yanling Road East to have their fortune told by counting the arhats. Starting with any of the arhats you choose, you roam through the rows and count the number of the arhats until the number matches your age. The expression of the particular arhat who matches your age represents your fortune in the coming year.

I went through the yellow front gate into the temple. After paying homage to the Guanyin with a thousand hands and a thousand eyes, I made my way to the Hall of the Arhats. The pomp and pageantry of four rows of 500 one-metre-tall statues of arhats are an impressive sight. The arhats wear different expressions — laughing, smiling, angry, scary. Some appear to be murmuring incantations or absorbed in meditation, while others are lost in thinking with eyes shut. Some hold alms-bowls or cymbals in their hands. My study of the arhats was interrupted by the arrival of a tour group from Taiwan. A young woman, who had been counting the arhats, stopped at the one who is mobbed by six plump children, tapping his ears, touching his lips, massaging his legs, pulling his leg, or leaning against his shoulder or arm. The woman giggled and another member of the group teased that it meant she was going to have six children. At this moment, a monk came and explained that the six children in the statue represent the six “thieves” which, in Buddhism, refer to the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. This arhat admonishes Buddhist followers to concentrate on the doctrine and never let the six dirty “thieves” lead them astray.

As a famous domain of the Chan Sect in Chinese Buddhism, Tianning Temple had its heyday when Master Rongrun became its abbot in early Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Since then a grand summons ceremony is held every 60 years. The latest ceremony took place in 1990, when 1,276 new converts arrived from Hong Kong and Taiwan to be tonsured.

In a discussion with a monk, I learned that a tonsured convert is issued with a pass that enables him to travel and be accommodated in whatever temple he happens to visit. This provides an easier way for monks to travel and learn from others.

### Fish Head Casserole at Tianmu Lake

The Tianmu Lake Tourist Resort is 80 km from the city proper of Changzhou. The lake is actually a large reservoir in wooded mountains that resembles the Thousand-Island Lake of Zhejiang.

People frequent the Tianmu Lake Hotel on the northern bank of the lake not so much for a holiday as for a taste of the fish head casserole.

The walls at the entrance are pasted with pictures of the hotel's chief chef, Zhu Shuncaï, standing with Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and other Chinese state leaders. The dining room is spacious, with a dozen round tables and seven or eight private rooms. At lunch time it was packed almost to overflowing. Without exception, each table had an earthen casserole pot. When my pot was served, I lifted the lid and saw a big fish head in steamy milky-white soup. Tasting a spoonful of the delicious soup, I found it was extremely fresh, and there was no fishy taste at all.

To cook fish soup to a milky colour takes hours of simmering. Wondering how the chef could keep all the tables amply supplied, I visited the kitchen. There were dozens of earthen pots placed on four rows of gas-burners. From among a team of chefs in white hats I found Zhu, who gave me a rundown of the preparation. First the fish heads are deep fried for about five minutes undisturbed in the wok. Each head goes into an earthen pot with ginger and water. It is then brought to a boil before enduring a few hours of simmering. The key is that only water from the Tianmu Lake is used.

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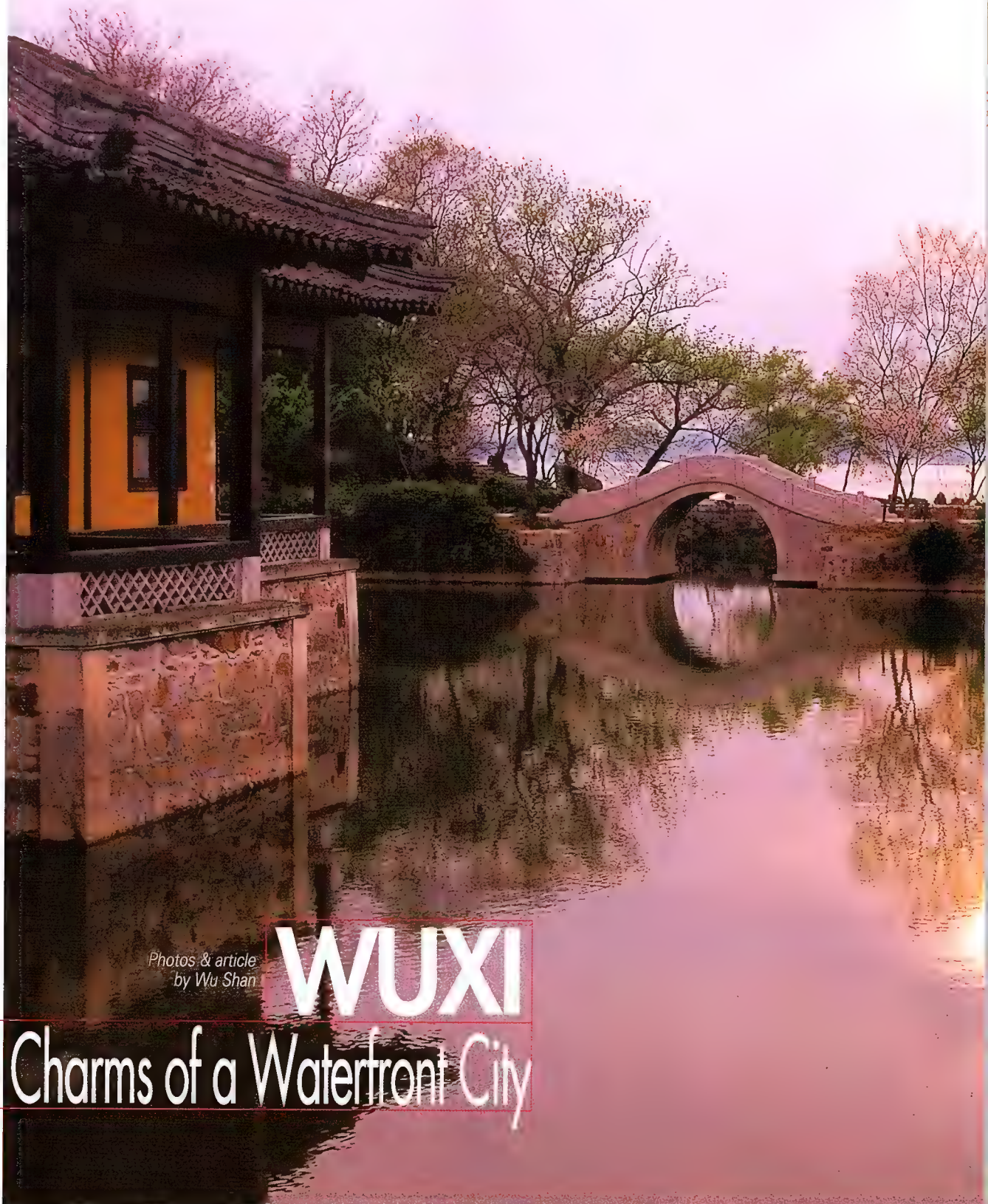
*Translated by Ling Yuan*

1. A holiday resort on the scenic Tianmu Lake
2. The last step of making a comb — painting
3. Combs made with images of ancient Chinese beauties
4. The fish head casserole, a speciality of Tianmu Lake
5. A fish head is simmered in an earthen pot for several hours with water from the Tianmu Lake.



4

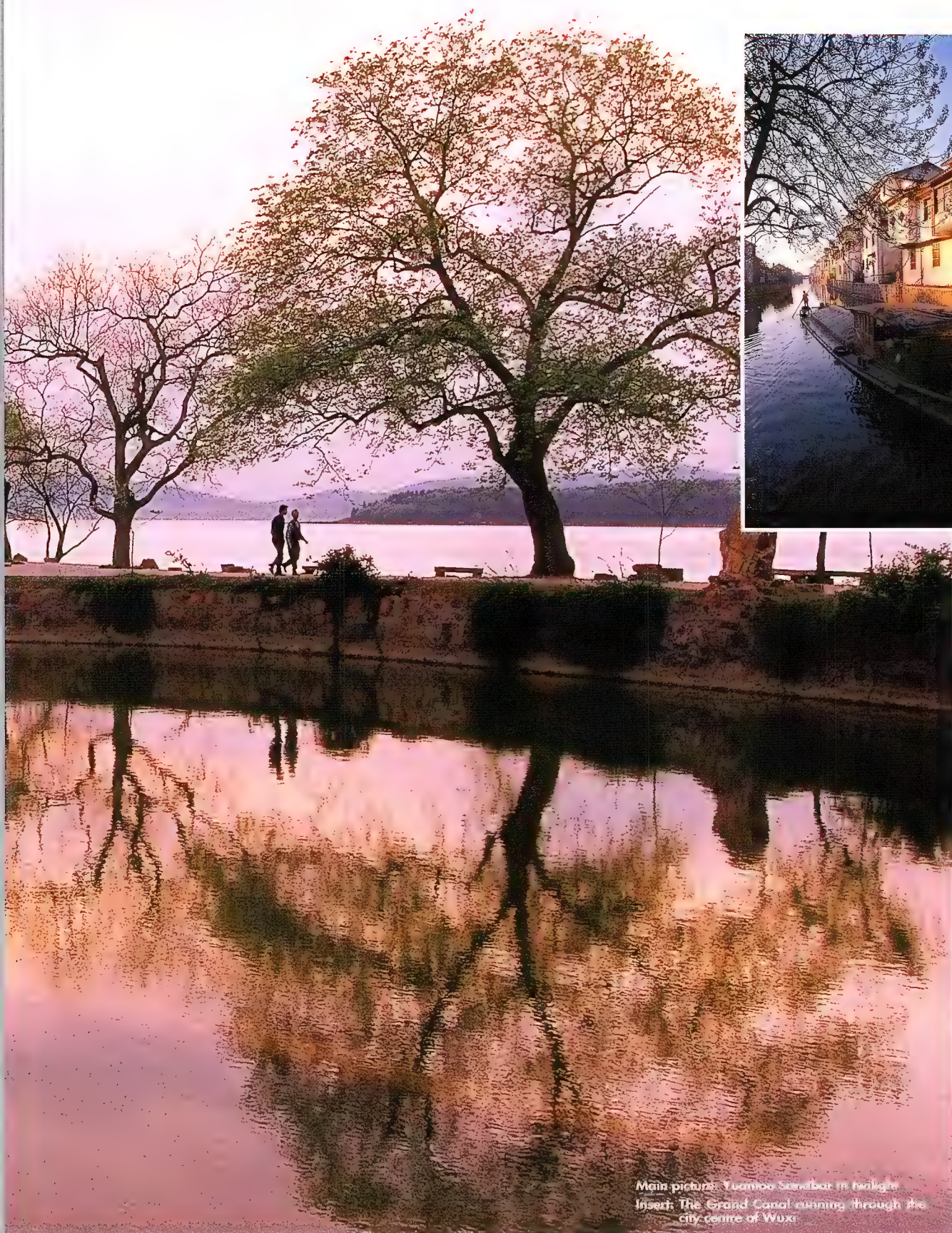




Photos & article  
by Wu Shan

**WUXI**

The Charms of a Waterfront City



Main picture: Yuanmiao Sandbar in twilight  
Insert: The Grand Canal running through the city centre of Wuxi



film and TV sites by the Taihu Lake — the Tang City and the Three Kingdoms & Outlaws of the Marsh City. The purpose of my current tour was to see what other splendid sights the city has to offer, and before long I was captivated by the plaintive erhu tune of *The Moon Mirrored in the Second Spring Under Heaven*, composed by a celebrated local musician, Hua Yanjun.

### The Second Spring Under Heaven

There is nothing unusual about the octagonal well called Second Spring Under Heaven, and the scenery around it is not as gorgeous as its name implies. Yet this did not prevent Hua Yanjun, a blind man known as Ah Bing, from composing the immortal

During my previous trips to Wuxi, I visited the famous tourist spots such as the massive 88-metre-tall bronze statue of Sakyamuni at the Maji Hill in Wuxi's suburbs and the

number that has become the pride of Wuxi. Hua was the son of a poor family who was sent to a local temple to become a Taoist monk. He became blind at the age of 30 and was soon driven out of the monastery, and eked out a living by playing the erhu, a traditional Chinese two-string musical instrument, in the streets. *The Moon Mirrored in the Second Spring Under Heaven* was a tune he composed during his vagabond years. His homeless life eventually took its toll, and in his old age he became bed-ridden in a local hospital. After the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, the government had his ingenious compositions recorded for the benefit of posterity.

### Folklore along the Grand Canal

The Grand Canal dissolves into a web of water lanes as it flows across the city. Whitewashed homes with grey rooftops, all with a stone stairway conducting down to the river, cluster along them. Typical of Wuxi's riverfront scene is the Qingming Bridge on the Bodu River estuary, where windowsills gleam with potted flowers, birds chirp merrily in cages dangling under the eaves, and the streets come alive with the slim girls plodding along leisurely. The bridge is a cultural phenomenon in itself. Built of 5,000 stone slabs to a height of 8.6 metres and spanning 12 metres, it is the largest and best-preserved single-arch bridge found south of the Yangtze.

Underneath the Qingming Bridge, the city's stone-banked canal runs parallel with the busy Nanchang Street before disappearing in a jungle of tall buildings. As I walked down Nanchang Street amidst the deafening traffic to the pier, I suddenly saw a wooden junk loaded with passengers and bicycles cross to the other side. I bought my ticket from the middle-aged man at the boat's helm for 20 cents and jumped aboard the swaying boat. The boat was inconvenient to me and I suggested a bridge be built, but the man explained, "Modern bridges cost a lot to build. A stone bridge over a narrow river like this couldn't handle so much traffic."

The Miaoguang Pagoda, built during the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), stands on the Grand Canal beyond the old city's southern gate. On a rainy day its seven-floor octagonal structure shimmers ethereally in the mist, evoking a scene akin to a photograph with fading colours that fits the pagoda's venerated age. The flagstone northern shore of the canal was once Wuxi's famed rice market; vestiges of it are still visible, in the form of docks and waterfront stores.

The eastern and western sections of the canal converge at the dagger-shaped Jiangjian Sandbar, and widen to 100 metres. Boats jostle in this area of crowded waterway. In bygone days it was known as Furong (Hibiscus) Lake. Huangpudun, a tiny isle with plenty of history, lies in its centre. It was where Fu Chai, the Duke of Wu of the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.), held a

banquet before his northern expedition against the state of Qi. The isle also provided anchorage for the imperial boats carrying Qing emperors Kangxi and Qianlong on their inspection tours along the Grand Canal. When Song-

1. A newly developed spot of Buddhist interest on Sanshan Hill
2. A section of Wuxi's canal with stone-block banks built in the ancient time
3. From Yuantou Sandbar, one can have a panoramic view of Taihu Lake.
4. The skyline of Wuxi viewed from Huishan Hill
5. Boats sailing on the broad waterway out of Jiangjian Sandbar





dynasty hero, Wen Tianxiang, was incarcerated by the Mongols, he wrote the celebrated poem *Passing by Wuxi*. The Zhengqi (Righteousness) Tower on the isle, a two-storey structure with curved eaves and flying roof corners, is dedicated to him.



### Huishan Clay Figurines


The gaily coloured, lifelike clay figurines produced at Huishan Hill represent an outstanding handicraft industry that helped put Wuxi on the map. During the late Ming Dynasty over 400 years ago, the local temples were always thronged with pilgrims and sightseers. To take advantage of the commercial opportunities, local farmers made and sold clay figurines in such images as the God of Longevity and the goddess in charge of childbirth. Eventually, Ah Fu, a child sitting cross-legged and holding a unicorn, became the trademark of Huishan figurines. Legend has it that Ah Fu is based on a twin brother and sister born to a local countrywoman, who were both plump, witty and energetic. A colourfully painted, three-metre-high statue of the rotund Ah Fu stands in the courtyard of the Wuxi Clay Figurines Museum.

The making of Huishan clay figurines reached its zenith during the Ming and Qing dynasties, when local artisans began producing figurines with moulds rather than manually. The use of moulds made mass production possible, and these figurines, whose simplistic and often exaggerated images are done in bright red, green, blue and yellow colours with freewheeling brushwork, have become emblems of the cultural tradition south of the Yangtse. Children, celestial beings and auspicious animals were among the common motifs. By comparison, hand-made figurines are of a more refined art. The images, mostly derived from opera characters, are more exquisitely crafted, and each has a distinct personality. While the coloration for Kunqu characters is bright in a tasteful way, that for the characters of Peking Opera is often more striking, with more attention paid to ornamental value. The works by master artists Zhou Asheng, Ding Ajin and Chen Guirong during the



### Wuxi's Pork Spare Ribs

White shrimps, mandarin fish, whitebait and turtle are the main ingredients for banquets served aboard pleasure boats cruising the Taihu Lake. It is a chance for gourmands to taste the delectable courses, while listening to the melodious notes of traditional Chinese music and enjoying the shifting scenery. The new "Banquet of Xi Shi", prepared in the Huaiyin-Yangzhou culinary tradition, is a triumph in boating banquets for Wuxi. Xi Shi was a stunning beauty of the Spring and Autumn Period.

Wuxi-style pork spareribs, which have long been known nationwide, impressed me most. The preparation is detailed and unusual. The ribs are placed in cold water with a little salt and boiled. Soy sauce, sugar, soup stock, and a gauze pouch filled with crushed ginger, Chinese cinnamon, and aniseed are added, and then the mixture is brought to a raging boil for 10 minutes. This is followed by two hours of simmering, until the soup thickens and the ribs become reddish brown. The meat is thus thoroughly tender and melts in the mouth with a delicate sweetness. 

*Translated by Ling Yuan*

1. The clay statue of Ah Fu in the courtyard of the Wuxi Clay Figurines Museum
2. The ancient Qingming Bridge which was built with 5,000 stone blocks
3. Xi Shi Banquet offered in the Lakeside Hotel serves food of Huaiyin-Yangzhou cuisine.
4. Huishan clay figurines have simple designs and striking colours.
5. Wuxi Spare Ribs, a famous local dish



Photos & article  
by Qian Jiang

# SUZHOU

## Exquisite Gardens and Embroidery

From the Song through to the Qing Dynasty, private gardens flourished in China. The best of these are found in Suzhou. Sometimes plain, but always exquisitely designed, the gardens were built making clever and harmonious use of pavilions, terraces, corridors, latticed windows, bridges, ponds and rockeries. I visited some of the most well-known gardens on the last leg of this Grand Canal tour.

Canglangting (Surging Wave Pavilion) is the oldest garden in Suzhou. Its layout and style are unique among all Suzhou gardens. An artificial hill of yellow stones stands by the river outside the garden's gate. The ingenious design of the dozen flower-patterned windows along the corridor walls from the Facing-Water Pavilion to the Fishing Terrace allows visitors to enjoy the merging of views from outside the garden into those within it.

The whole garden is dotted with clusters of hills and green

bamboo groves amidst numerous boulders. A small path past the covered corridor behind the Fishing Terrace, Imperial Tablet and Fragrance Hall, leads to the Surging Wave Pavilion. While walking inside the corridor, you feel as if the water is distant and hills are close; from the outside, the hills seem distant and the water close.

Wangshi (Fisherman's) Garden is a rather small garden that has a compact layout and unique buildings. Three rows of former residential houses in classical architecture stand in the eastern section. The brick carvings above the main hall's front gate were done during the reign of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty. Legendary stories are vividly carved in the brick on both sides of the gate.

In the main garden, a corridor following the hilly terrain leads to the Qiaofeng (Woodsman's) Path. Four buildings stand there — Sheya (Duck Shooting) Pavilion, Zhuoying (Tassel Washing) Pavilion, Yuedao Fenglai (Moon and Wind Coming) Pavilion and Pavilion of Viewing Pines and Enjoying Paintings. Each one faces a different direction, providing different scenes in spring, summer, autumn and winter, as well as changing scenes of the time of day.

The west section is the inner garden. Chinese herbaceous peonies grow around the house there. Since flowers appear at the end of spring, the house is called Dianchun (End of Spring) Pavilion. Through its rear windows you can see bamboo, plums, banana

### Basic Information of Major Suzhou Gardens

Name	Address	Year Built	Size (m <sup>2</sup> )	Distinctions	Transport (bus)	Opening hours	Fee (yuan)
<b>Zhuozheng Garden</b>	178 Dongbei St.	1509	51,950	Focused on water, housing the Garden Museum	2, 3, 5, 27, 301	8:00-17:00	20
<b>Liuyuan Garden</b>	79 Liuyuan Rd.	1593	23,310	Artistic use of space	5	8:00-17:00	16
<b>Wangshi Garden</b>	11 Kuojiatou Lane	1174	5,400	Exquisite design around a pond	2, 4, 31	8:00-17:00 19:00-22:00	10 45
<b>Huanxiu Villa</b>	262 Jingde Rd.	Early 17th century	2,179	Man-made hill of Taihu Lake rocks		8:00-17:00	Free
<b>Canglang Pavilion</b>	3 Canglangting St.	1045	10,980	No walls, merged with natural scenery	1, 102	8:00-17:00	8
<b>Lion Grove</b>	23 Yuanlin Rd.	1342	11,140	Strange rocks	2, 3, 5, 27, 301	8:00-17:00	10
<b>Yiyuan Garden</b>	343 Renmin Rd.	1874	6,270	Absorbed the best of other gardens	1, 102, 103	8:00-17:00	4
<b>Yipu Garden</b>	5 Wenya Lane	Mid-16th century	3,800	Pond and man-made hill	3, 4, 301	8:00-16:00	3
<b>Ouyuan Garden</b>	8 Xiao Xinqiao Lane	1720s-1730s	9,000	Man-made hill of yellow stone	5, 701	8:00-16:00	5
<b>Taiping Mountain Villa</b>	Taiping Mountain, suburbs of Suzhou	Early 17th century	53,000	Backed by a mountain, with temples and towers	38	8:00-16:00	6

trees, and Taihu rocks arranged like a traditional Chinese painting. The Ming Garden built in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art was modelled on this courtyard.

Shizilin (Lion Grove) is a compact extraordinary garden. One section is mainly dotted with abstract rock formations while the other consists of ponds. A covered corridor winds its way around the garden, hidden here and there. This garden is famous for its man-made hill of Taihu rocks, which occupies nearly half the area.

Looking south from Baixuan (Cypress Pavilion), you can have the best view of the hill, where ancient cypresses grow. By the stream spanned with a small stone bridge, wood fossils and strange rocks are placed. On top of the hill, are displayed rocks in various shapes, which have been given names such as Sunshine, Moon, Jade and Piercing Clouds. The hill is also an intricately designed labyrinth of caves that often mystifies visitors.

The garden's corridors offer a special enjoyment for calligraphy lovers. Inlaid on 67 stone slabs are carvings of works by great ancient calligraphers.

Zhuozhengyuan (Humble Administrator's Garden), built in the Ming Dynasty, is the largest garden in Suzhou. The focus is on water, which covers over half the garden, and its buildings are designed to complement it in a plain but elegant style.

A winding corridor leads into the central area where a stone bridge in elegant ancient style greets you. Here you can see the Northern Temple Pagoda, which seems to be within the garden, although it is about one km away. This is known as "borrowing

scenes", a unique technique used in Suzhou's garden building. The exquisite windows on all four sides of the Ming-style Yuanxiang (Distant Fragrance) Hall allow enjoyable views of the garden's grand scenes. Blossoming lotus flowers in the pond fill the hall with a sweet scent in summer. Open walkways lead westward past the Yiyu



1. The Humble Administrator's Garden

2. Fisherman's Garden

3. Lion Grove



in the west section winds up and down over the water, in harmony with the whitewashed walls, green trees and clear water. The 36 Yuanyang (Mandarin Ducks) Hall and 18 Datura Flowers Hall are the main structures in the western part.

Liuyuan (Lingering Garden) was designed around a central pond, with the surrounding artificial hills, pavilions, small bridges and covered corridors all connected. The eastern part is mainly halls and towers, while the west side is dominated by hills. The garden is noteworthy for its compact design that fully utilises the space. The garden is divided into several parts by groups of buildings, and each part has a different scene. The windows, which are built in various characteristic styles, however, link the scenes together. The expression, "changing views with every step", is most appropriate in this garden.

### Suzhou Embroidery — Work of Heavenly Art

Suzhou became renowned worldwide for its embroidery over 1,000 years ago. The most famous of China's four top types of embroidery, it is distinguished by its fine workmanship, beautiful patterns, deft stitching and delicate style.



(Leaning Jade) Hall to a covered bridge called Xiao Feihong (Small Flying Rainbow), whose vermilion pillars reflect in the water like a rainbow. This is the only covered bridge in all of the Suzhou gardens.

The covered corridor along the walls

The earliest embroidery was mainly used in costume decoration. According to *Anecdotes of Gardens* by Liu Xiang, embroidered clothes and leopard skins were worn by Wu people to receive guests during the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.). Proof that artistic embroidery had started as early as the Tang Dynasty (618-907) comes from a poem, *Praising Embroidered Bed Curtains*, by the Tang poet Hu Ling:

"In the evening glow the flowers blossom tenderly in front of the hall,  
Contesting to be painted on the girl's bed curtain.  
When the embroidery is completed and shown in the garden,  
It attracts orioles to fly down from the trees."

The embroidery works of that time were mainly single-sided, which, with thread knots and irregular stitching visible on the back, cannot be admired from both sides. The single-colour double-sided embroidery that developed in the following Song Dynasty (960-1279), was more difficult since it

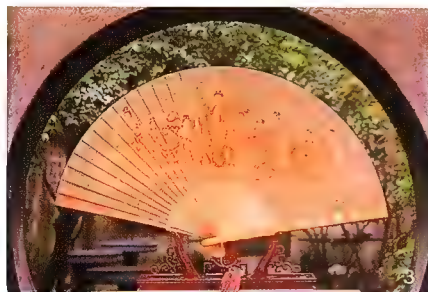
requires the same pattern and colour on both sides through one stitch. A double-sided embroidered slipcase for Buddhist scriptures with a pattern of circled

phoenixes has been excavated from a monastery. In the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), a limited number of double-sided round silk fans and screens embroidered with beauties was made.

In early 1960s, Suzhou artisans invented the double-colour, double-sided embroidery. In the 1980s, the three-difference double-sided embroidery appeared. This technique requires uniform stitching and thousands of knots to be hidden. A tiny mistake on the thin and semi-transparent silk may distort the work or change the colour. The most difficult technique is to make the embroideries on the two sides similar but at the same time maintain a difference.

I joined a tour to see the elegant embroideries at the Suzhou Embroidery Art Museum, which is near the Huanxiu Mountain Villa. The first thing that greets visitors as they walk into the main hall is a wonderful example of a double-sided, multi-colour embroidered screen entitled *Parrot and Beauty*. A beautiful lonesome maiden, wearing silver and pearl jewellery, stands in an

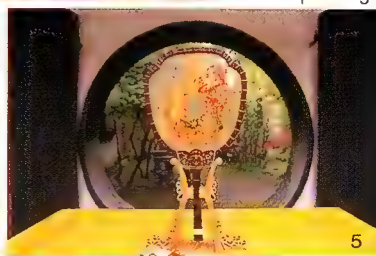
moon-shaped doorway holding a round fan while watching a green parrot. The semi-transparent curtain and green bamboo behind her appear to swing in the breeze. The reverse side displays a different picture — the beauty wears golden jewellery and the parrot has turned



white. The leaves and curtain are also done in different colours. This screen employs a dozen different techniques and uses a few hundred different colours of silk threads.

The design of an embroidery can be copied from a traditional Chinese painting, an oil painting or a photo. Various stitching

techniques are used to display different artistic effects. To get an idea of this technique, I took a close look at another piece of embroidery, *Huanhuan and Mimi*.



*Huanhuan* is the name of a panda who was given as a gift to Japan by China. Unlike the *Parrot and Beauty* which used a traditional painting as its model, this work, which displays this lovely panda with a silver grey cat in the background, was done from a picture and an oil painting. The main method used is random stitching. To effect the three differences in stitching, colour and image, the artist used extra fine threads. A normal silk thread was split into 20 strands, and sometimes up to 48 strands. Thousands of strands of

different thickness and colours were used in radiating patterns to realise the effect of soft and smooth textures. Since silk thread has the capacity to strongly reflect light, the embroidery has a richer colour than the original photograph and oil painting. The eyes are created by using assembled and multiple stitching and dozens of different coloured threads. Moving around at different angles, I could always see the panda's watery eyes rotate.



Translated by M.Q.



1. Artisans of Suzhou doing double-sided embroidery
2. It requires tens of thousands of careful stitches to do an art work like this.
3. Another popular souvenir from Suzhou — fan made of sandalwood
4. The exquisite bridge of a folded fan
5. An embroidered silk fan
6. A fan made of ivory is a precious handicraft work.
7. In the silk fan workshop



江南名鎮示意圖  
Towns in the Yangtze River Delta

# Tips for the Traveller in Southeastern China



Spring is the best season for visiting famous towns in southeastern China, when it is warm and flowers are blossoming. Throughout history, Chinese emperors have made spring visits there. The Sui-dynasty Emperor Yangdi went to Yangzhou to enjoy beautiful flowers and Qing-dynasty emperors Kangxi and Qianlong always made their southern inspection tours in spring. Tang-dynasty poet Li Bai composed a poem depicting his trip to Yangzhou in spring.

## Suggested Tour

One of the best ways to tour the towns along this area of the Grand Canal is to fly into Nanjing and depart for home from Shanghai. It is a two-hour bus ride from Nanjing to Yangzhou where you can start your tour and, similarly, a two-hour journey from Suzhou to Shanghai.

Here, we suggest some additional attractions on such a tour.

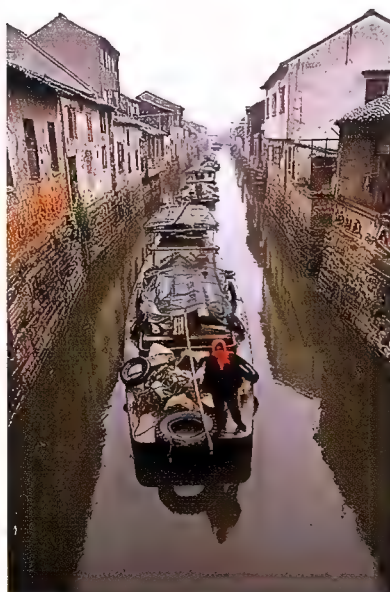
## Nanjing

Sample a mixture of the old and the new at the Fuzimiao (Confucius Temple) and the lively Qinhuai River area. Day or night, you can find bargains at the many market stalls and an infinite variety of tasty foods at the snack bars and restaurants there. In the suburbs, the Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum is a solemn and magnificent modern affair, whereas the Xiaoling Mausoleum is a 600-year-old Ming tomb with its imposing Divine Way lined with hundreds of stone animals and figures. The nearby Linggu Temple is famous for its brick Beamless Hall, built in the Ming Dynasty without a single beam. The double-deck Changjiang Bridge across the Yangtse River is one of China's

longest bridges and a source of pride to all Chinese since it was completed with Chinese technology.

## Yangzhou

The Daming Temple on Pingshan (Flat Hill) was first built over 1,500 years ago during the reign of Emperor Daming in the Southern Dynasties period. It was the place where the famous Tang-dynasty Monk Jian Zhen, who later brought Buddhism to Japan, had lectured and spread Buddhism. In front of its Pingyuan Tower there is an ancient giant tree which blossoms white flowers in spring. According to legend, Sui-



dynasty Emperor Yangdi came specially to Yangzhou for this flower, thus making it famous all over the country.

The Jian Zhen Memorial Hall, near Daming Temple, was built in 1963 to commemorate the 1,200th birthday of Monk Jian Zhen. This monk was determined to bring Buddhism to Japan but succeeded in getting there only in his sixth attempt at the age of 66. He established a Buddhist sect in Japan and is greatly honoured there. The main hall, designed by the famous architect Liang Sicheng, was modelled on the Golden Hall in Tosyodaiji Temple of Japan.

## Zhenjiang

Zhenjiang has several places that provide a good view of the Yangtse River and the city. One is the Beigu Hill, on which the Song-dynasty Duoqinglou (Tower of Many Views) and the Ganlu



(Sweet Dew) Temple stand. Another choice is a short ferry ride to the Jiaoshan Island, where there is the Jiaoshan Temporary Imperial Palace and calligraphic treasures in the Forest of Tablets. The island is a world of green in the muddy river, and so is known as the Floating Jade Mountain.

The old section of the city has a 1,000-year-old street called Song-Yuan Street, at the foot of Yuntai Hill. This sloping street paved with stone slabs is a fascinating place to walk. At the corner of this street, the Zhenjiang Museum occupies the former British Consulate building from the time of the foreign concessions. It shows off interesting bits of history in its displays of Tang paintings and silverware, and bronze and pottery relics.

## Changzhou

The Hongmei (Red Plum) Park is very close to the Tianning Temple. In olden times, each novice monk had to plant a red plum tree around the Hongmei Pavilion in the park, and so today, spring is a particularly glorious event there. Walking around this large park, you will also find the seven-storey Wenbi (Writing Brush) Pagoda beside the Red Plum Pavilion.

The original city walls and three circular moats found in the 3,000-year-old town of Yancheng, seven km south of Changzhou, are the most intact remains of such structures of that

period ever found in China. Valuable bronze and pottery relics have been excavated from the site.

### Wuxi

Wuxi is the perfect base for visiting Taihu Lake, some six km away. This shallow lake is a busy place, with duck farms and fish ponds along the shore and partitioned areas for lotus and water chestnut growing. It is a popular place, with numerous boat tours, some of which come on day trips from Shanghai.

One of the best places to get a view of the lake and Wuxi as well is from the Yuantou (Turtle Head) Isle, which is actually a peninsula jutting out into the lake. Near the arched bridge leading to the isle is the Liyuan Garden, which blends its pavilions harmoniously into the natural scenery. Sanshan (Three Hill) Island in the lake also offers



wonderful lake vistas.

Besides being the home of the Second Spring Under Heaven, the 45-hectare Xihui Park in Wuxi's western suburbs also contains an Imperial Stele Pavilion with inscriptions of Qing Emperor Qianlong. The many teahouses in the park are popular with local residents.

### Suzhou

Besides its well-known gardens, Suzhou has plenty of other interesting sights. There are temples such as the Hanshan (Cold Mountain)

Temple at Fengqiao Town, which became famous through Tang poet Zhang Ji's verses; the Beisi (North Temple) Pagoda, which has the tallest pagoda south of the Yangtze (nine storeys) and offers great city views; and the Lingyan Hill with its view of Taihu Lake that Emperor Qianlong never missed enjoying, and many legendary stories about the ancient beauty of Xi Shi.

The Panmen Gate, in the southwest of the city, is the only survivor of Suzhou's eight original city gates from the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.). Its two massive land gates and two gates astride the canal were effective barriers to invasion long ago. The 1,000-year-old Twin Pagodas, in the east of the city, stand 30 metres tall within a walled enclosure alongside the ruins of a Tang-dynasty temple.

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# Engraving Life with Hammer and Chisel

Photos & article by Liu Hui



Quyang County in Hebei Province is famous for its stone carvings. One of its representative sculptors, Lu Jinqiao, has engaged in carving for over a half a century. Using his hammer and chisel, as a painter would a pen, the master artist has created many marvelous art works.

Lu Jinqiao is now 71. He began to learn carving at the age of eight from his uncle Liu Dongyuan, who was also a stone carving artist. As an apprentice, he learned to carve on stone, wood and ivory. This enabled him later to use the meticulous craftsmanship of wood and ivory carving techniques in his stone carvings. To make up the lack of a formal schooling in art, he spent much of his spare time travelling and studying the art works of the murals and sculptures in the famous grottoes of Dunhuang, Yungang and Longmen, Wutai Mountain, and the Yongle Palace which houses the county's most treasured murals. He also visited places

such as Shoushan and Qintian that are also noted stone-carving centres. He compared the shapes, features, line carving and chisel work of the stone carvings of different historical periods in order to absorb the quintessence of both Chinese and foreign engraving and painting.

However, just as he was throwing himself into his career, the "cultural revolution" started. During the 10 years of adverse conditions, Lu never lost his high aspirations. Though he was forced to attend meetings during the day, at night he carved in secret. It was at this time, in a shabby room where he was illegally detained, that he completed his famous wood carving entitled *Three Great Masters*. This piece is based on the Buddhist legends in which Manjusri sits on a black lion, Samantabhadra on a white elephant, and Avalokitesvara on a one-horned beast.

The *Three Great Masters*, an art work that combines realism with romanticism, is engraved using realistic and exaggerating methods. The figures all look beautiful, graceful, natural and unrestrained, with the charm of a female. The animals they ride on are robust and lifelike. The fact that they turn to look back at their masters shows their absolute loyalty. Much later, the work was highly praised when it went on display at the Guangzhou Commodities Fair. In 1977, when the



Chairman Mao Memorial Hall in Beijing was built, Lu Jinqiao headed a group of 200 Quyang stone carvers who went to the capital to engrave the white marble balustrades of the hall.

In the early 1980s, Lu made new progress in his stone carvings. He set up an engraving factory in Quyang and at the same time produced numerous pieces of elaborate stone-carving works of his own. From 1982 to 1983, he engraved his masterpieces, *The Crouching Beast and Avalokitesvara*, and the new *Three Great Masters*. With ingenious design and meticulous crafting, these white marble carvings won the Hundred-Flower Award at the China Arts and Crafts Competition.

Later Lu founded the Quyang Lu Jinqiao Architectural Art and Engraving Company and helped establish Quyang's first engraving school. It was not until 1988, due to advancing age and failing eyesight, that Lu stopped his stone carving.

Over 50 years, Lu created and collated many different carving techniques, forming a style of his own. No matter what type of carving he did or what style he chose, he never made a draft or sketch first. He relied on his hammer and chisel to make his design in the raw material. Any block of stone could become a fine piece of art work in his hands. In recognition of his great talent, Lu's engraving company is now often frequented by tourist groups to Hebei.

1. Though retired, Lu still does some wood carving.

2. Lu Jinqiao, an artist who has dealt with stone all his life

3. Lu has carved statues of foreign images too.

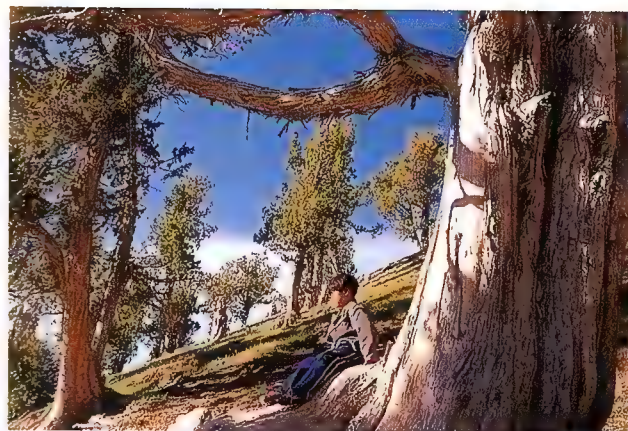
4. The Heavenly Girl Scattering Flowers, a huge work completed under Lu's instruction

ON THE WAY

# Roving the Qinghai Plateau

*Photos & article by Shi Baoxin*

The newly built "Great Walls" on the grassland



— Ancient cypress trees growing on the holy hill —



— The Living Buddha who has studied Buddhism in Beijing —



— People of the Great Wall Township —

While Tibet is becoming an increasingly hot tourist destination, Qinghai Province, which shares the same highland with Tibet, remains unfamiliar to most travellers. Occupying the northeast portion of the vast Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, Qinghai has high mountains, including the one that gives rise to China's two mighty rivers, the Yellow River and the Yangtse River. Its Qaidam Basin holds vast pastureland as well as many legendary stories. In short, the province is a place of fascinating people and some surprising and interesting little wonders.



## Great Wall Township

I was recently in the area around the town of Dulan, east of the Qaidam Basin, in central Qinghai, chasing the blue sheep on a photography shoot with Yang Yonghong. Yang, a Tibetan and head of the Dulan International Hunting Ground, had previously been a local government official and knew the land and its people like the back of his hand. He mentioned that we should go to the Cypress Mountain, which was not far away, in a valley named Reshui (Hot Water).

### Naked Giants

We took a narrow rugged road off the Qinghai-Tibet Highway about 20 km south of Dulan. Our jeep bumped along like a small fishing boat on a rough sea until we turned past a hill. That's when the wondrous scenery came into sight. In a basin-like depression



surrounded by mountains, gently undulating hillocks formed long lines of graceful curves like innumerable naked giants lying on the ground. The land around them was completely covered by a dense growth of grass; there was not a spot of exposed soil anywhere. The scenery here was very different from the large stretches of yellow sand on the edge of the Qaidam Basin only 10 km away. The grass was fine and short like a golf course green.

### 'Great Walls' on the Plateau

The next wonder to greet our eyes was the row upon row of walls which cut the land into numerous squares. They wound their way up hills and down dales. From a distance, it seemed that we were looking at parts of the Great Wall, but up close I found that the walls were made of adobe. They stood about 1.5 metres high and one metre wide at the top. The adobe "bricks" were directly cut off from the ground, so they still contain grass. Though they were not made with a mould, every one of them appeared almost exactly the same size, showing the high skill of the wall builders.

### The Partitioned Pasture

Before we drove on to the valley to see the Cypress Mountain, Yang and I climbed to the top of a hill and had a look around. Through the binoculars, I could see that the "Great Walls" extended far into the distance. Yang had been involved in the construction of these walls, and he explained the background of building them in a somewhat remorseful tone. About a decade ago, when the land was divided among the farmers to implement the household-responsibility

policies, the sheep, cattle, horses and pastures were also divided among the herders households. To keep the sheep and cattle from grazing in other households' pastures, which might arise conflicts among the herdsman, a sort of blockage had to be built. Some suggested that wire fences be used, but others held that they were costly and easy to get rusty.

### Permanent Walls

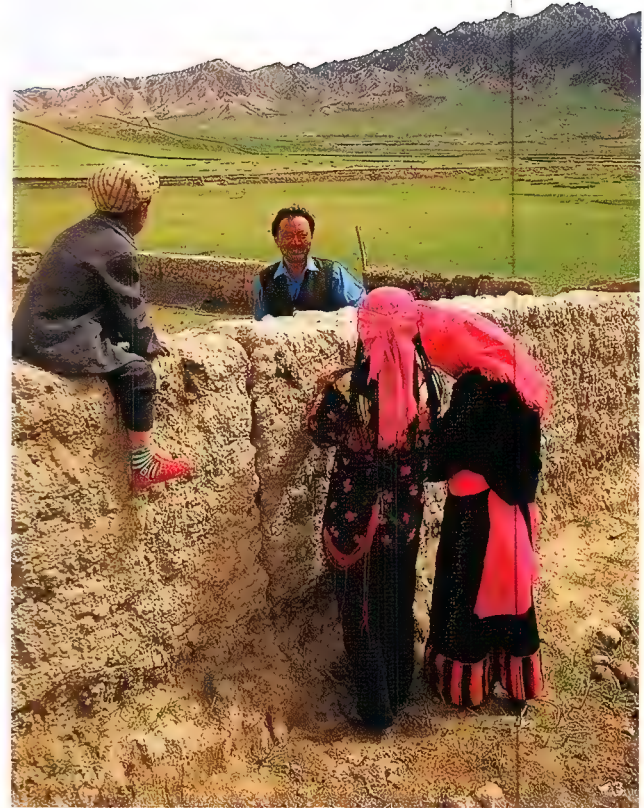
Yang was working as a member of the team that supervised the division of the pastures in this valley at the time. The team held meetings on several consecutive nights until they came up with this method — to build adobe walls.

Yang explained that the walls must be built in the right season. The dry season is not suitable because the soil is so dry that it cannot be cut into the correct shape with a shovel. The adobe blocks were made in the rainy season when the ground was thoroughly soaked. Two parallel cuts were made into the grassy ground. The soil between the two cuts was then divided into rectangles and lifted out, along with the roots of the grass, with a shovel. When the walls were built, the grass roots locked the adobe blocks together. The blocks are laid in an interlocking fashion in the same way as the Great Wall. The walls are so strong that they have lasted undamaged for over 10 years so far.

### Future for the Pasture

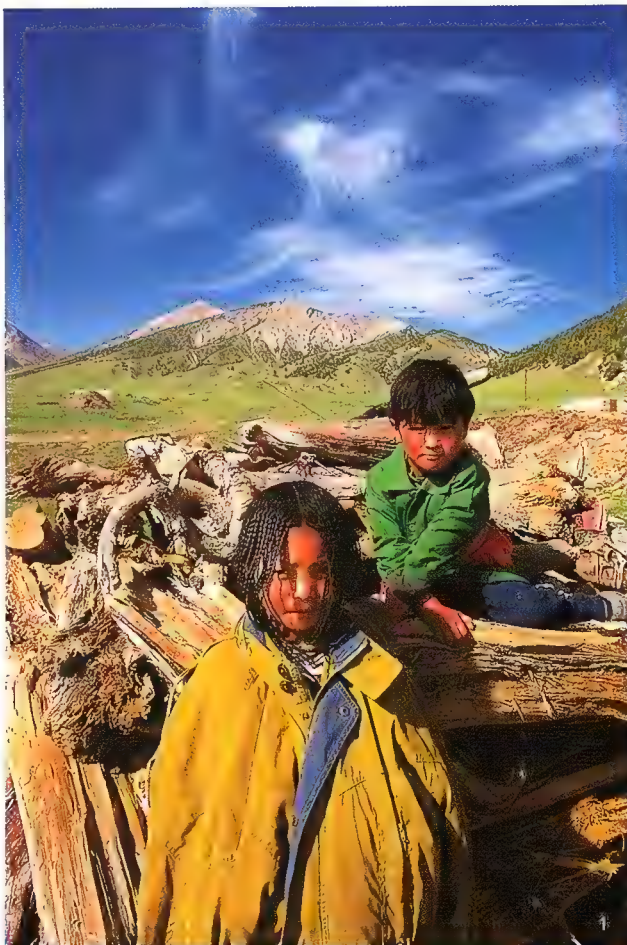
Yang spoke with a heavy heart. He appeared to be worried that these "Great Walls" had spoiled the natural scenery. In retrospect he also wondered if the wire fences would have been better for the environment. Eventually we concluded that sometimes history necessitated the changes and people just had to learn from the past to improve the future.

As the sun dropped on the horizon, smoke rose gently from the herdsman's yurts, and flocks of sheep crowded into walled enclosures. Looking down from the top of a hill, I found that the sheep



enclosures were like city walls, the yurts where the herder families lived, like palaces, and the partition walls of the pasture, like the Great Wall marking the boundaries of those ancient states. It could have represented a miniature version of the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.) on the Central Plains, in which seven powerful states coexisted. I smiled and suggested to Yang that perhaps he could market the pastureland area in such a way to draw tourists to the area. The herder families and animals wouldn't be disturbed, yet tourists could see the changes and achievements of the local people. Yang surveyed the area with his binoculars, deep in thought — he was probably taking my suggestion into serious consideration.

1. The wall built to mark the border of each family's pastureland looks very much like the Great Wall.
2. The green land seems to be a natural golf course.
3. People living within their walls
4. The wall is the result of the implementation of the household-responsibility system.



## Holy Mountain, Old Cypresses

At dusk, while our jeep was being refuelled in Dulan, Yang took me on a long walk through the partitioned pasture deep into the valley. A dog suddenly barked and came gradually closer, baring its teeth. It was a Tibetan mastiff, a very fierce dog. Yang told me to stay calm. Several times he bent down, pretending to pick up a stone, and each time the dog retreated a little bit. But the dog would keep coming back; sweat was dripping from my chin. When we reached the door of the temple I breathed a sigh of relief.

### A Quick Butcher and Cook

We walked into the building beside the temple, which was our lodging for the night. In the dim light of a kerosene lamp, I could see our host, a Tibetan man in his 30s, and his three daughters. We had to communicate with Yang acting as the interpreter. He talked with Yang for some time and then walked out to kill a sheep. Amazingly, just over an hour later, our host brought a large bowl of hot boiled mutton into the room. While drinking barley wine, we helped ourselves to the half-cooked mutton with a Tibetan knife. It was still quite tough, but the instant noodles in the soup were tasty. The three girls, aged about 10, seven and three, sat around the table too, helping themselves to the mutton leg. Their mother had died of illness the previous year and their father was having a hard time looking after them while making a living.

After dinner, the moon rose. It brightened up the courtyard so much that as if it were covered with snow. The branches of the cypresses on the big mountain behind the temple were clearly visible in the moonlight.

### Thousand-Year-Old Cypresses

The following morning, I got up quietly on my own. After washing my face in a stream by the temple, I climbed up the mountain. This area is 4,000 metres above sea level, so I paused every now and then to admire the ancient cypresses along the path and to allay the feeling of altitude sickness.

The old trees had rooted themselves in the crevices in the rocks. Some of the roots were like an octopus clenching a rocky cliff with its tentacles. The growing roots had expanded the cracks, leaving some of them as wide as about a dozen cm. Although the trunks of the trees were not as thick and sturdy as the cypresses on the North China Plain, the trees were likely over 1,000 years old. The harsh cold at that altitude



and limited poor quality soil had kept the trees small.

When the sun shone into the valley, the cypresses were enshrouded in golden rays. The extreme beauty freed me from all worldly thoughts. With the sun to warm me up and the beautiful scenery in front of my eyes, I forgot where I was.

Then I saw Yang searching for me through his binoculars as he agilely made his way up the mountain.

### The Only Trees That Survived

I wondered why only this mountain was covered with ancient cypresses while the surrounding mountains were all bare. Yang explained that it was not so during his youth. He still remembered a few words of an old folk song: "High above, where the white clouds float, the mountain is green." During the years of war, every time an army unit passed through, trees were felled for fuel and warmth. So the trees on the mountains decreased sharply. In 1958, during the campaign to

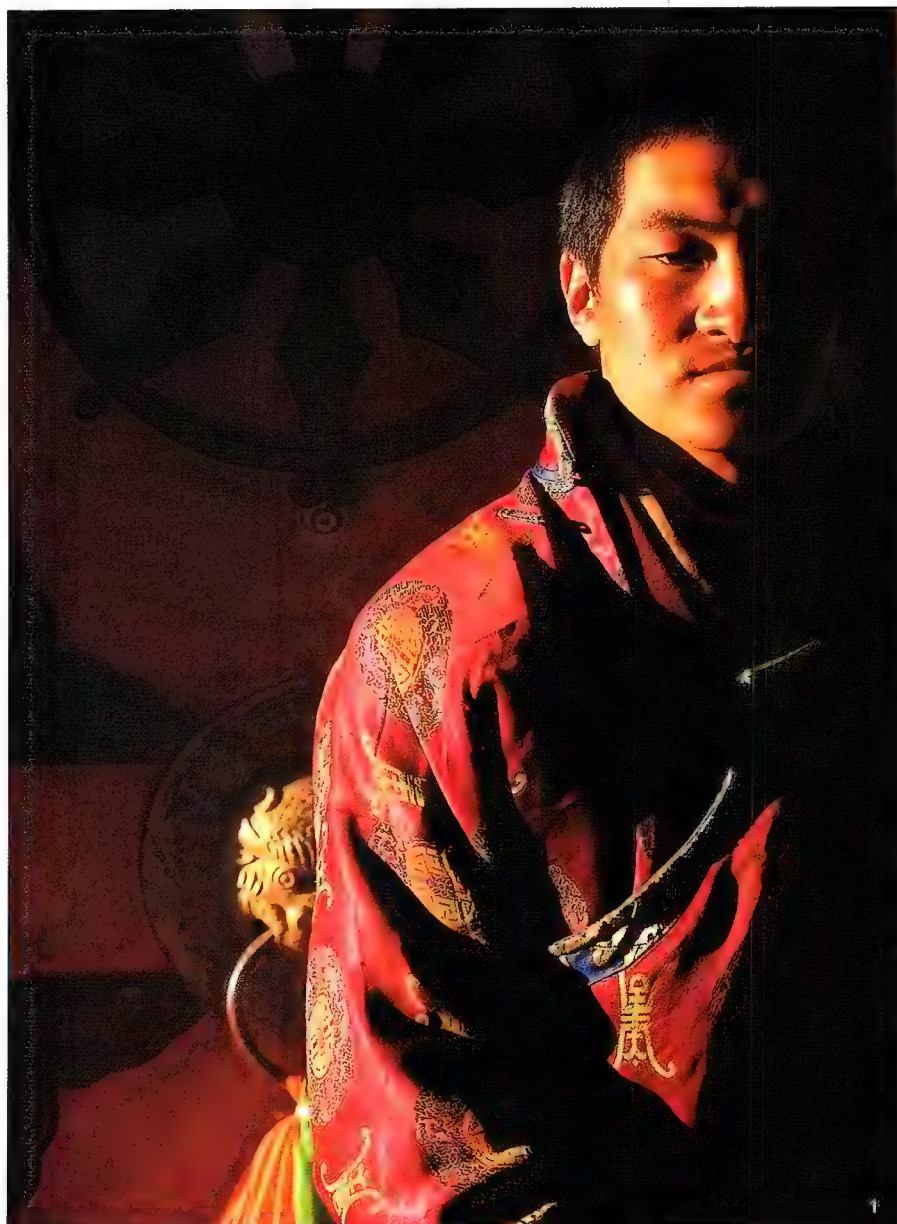


make iron and steel in the Great Leap Forward, it was worse. As the makeshift furnaces were fuelled with wood, almost all the trees were cut down. This mountain was saved simply because there was a Buddhist temple in this valley and no one dared anger the Mountain God.

Yang pointed to a pile of Mani marker stones and a pole with a prayer streamer fluttering in the breeze on the mountain top, where sacrifices to the Mountain God were offered. Owing to people's respect for the Mountain God, this mountain remains a rare patch of green on the edge of the desert in the Qaidam Basin.

1. The two elder children of our host herdsman
2. The ancient cypresses have extended their roots deeply and widely to survive.
3. Trees like these may have grown for 100 years.
4. Due to the stronger wind and lower temperature, trees on the top of the hill are usually shorter and smaller.
5. It is believed that the hill and trees are under the protection of the Mountain God.





### A College-Educated Living Buddha

During my previous trip a few years ago, we searched for the blue sheep to take photos and ended up on the top of a mountain at 4,700 metres altitude in Kugri Township, where a group of blue sheep was grazing. The wool of the blue sheep was almost the same in colour as the rocks on the mountain. Their agile streamlined bodies were extremely beautiful. Unfortunately, a flock of crows suddenly flew over with loud cries, causing the alarmed sheep to bolt and disappear.

### The 19-Year-Old Living Buddha

In Kugri, Yang had arranged for us to have our dinner and stay the night at the home of a Living Buddha. In my mind, a Living Buddha, who is the holy soul of the area and leader of the temples, must be an aged person. Though somewhat in awe, I was happy to have this opportunity.

We were greeted by a woman, who wore a red head scarf and looked in her middle 30s. Once inside the house, I realised that the

Living Buddha was the young man sitting in the centre of the living room. He extended his hand and beckoned us to sit on the long sofa. Yang knew him quite well and was soon engaged in a conversation in Tibetan. The mother of the Living Buddha, the woman who greeted us at the door, brought us some butter tea and fritters and then a bowl of piping hot instant noodles. The Living Buddha had already eaten and he watched us eat with interest.

The Living Buddha's name is Tudan Ga'ang. When he was 15, he was picked as the reincarnation of Huaduo, the former Living Buddha and abbot of the Shandan Qielang Temple in Kugri, Dulan County. At 16, he was sent to study at the Academy of Tibetan Buddhism in Beijing's Yonghegong. He studied mainly Buddhist scriptures, and graduated at 19.

### A Learned Doctor of Tibetan Medicine

Beside the Living Buddha's bed a row of bookcases stood, full of books of Buddhist scriptures in Tibetan. By the wall another cabinet contained many medicine bottles with labels written in either Tibetan or Han Chinese; the ones I recognised contained antibiotic medicines such as penicillin and tetracycline. This belonged to the Living Buddha's father, Zaxi Dongchu, a doctor of Tibetan and Western medicine. The doctor had gone out on a day-long trip to see a patient and would not return until



noon the following day. It is interesting that both father and son are engaged in the work of saving people — one on the physical side and the other on the spiritual side. While the Living Buddha gives guidance to people in cultivating themselves for the next life, his father works to relieve people of their illness and pains in this life.



Later, I learned that Dr. Zaxi Dongchu had studied for three years at the Beijing Senior Academy of Buddhism, majored in Tibetan Language. He had acquired the academic degree of Senior Master of Vajra in a monastery and was well versed in Tibetan medicine. Many of the Tibetans in the Dulan area have been effectively treated by him. Last year, he travelled to Harbin in Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, where he was commissioned as a doctor of Tibetan medicine at a medical centre.

That night the Living Buddha kindly offered me his big bed when he slept on the sofa.

At daybreak the following day, as the sky was turning red in the east, I quietly slipped out of the house. I walked up the slope on the side of the temple to the dagoba and scriptural pennant, waiting for the sun to rise on the plateau. Just before the sun emerged, the Living Buddha also came. He was dressed in a jacket with the Buddhist religious symbols and a pair of shining leather shoes. He looked like a very lively youth in the morning sunlight. We enjoyed the sunrise together before heading off to breakfast.



1. Tudan Ga'ang, the young Living Buddha
2. The Living Buddha's mother, who raises yaks and does all the housework
3. Shandan Qielang Temple nestles deep in the valley in Kugri Township.
4. Inside the Shandan Qielang Temple
5. Kugri Township bathed in the morning rays

## Tips for the Traveller

Dulan is located on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway between Xining and Golmud in Qinghai Province. Along the 400 km journey from Xining to Dulan are the Sun and Moon Mountain, Backward Flowing River, Qinghai Lake, Bird Island and Caka Lake. Natural scenery within the Dulan County is varied. There are deserts, grassland and snow-capped peaks. The Dulan International Hunting Ground, Cypress Mountain and "Great Wall" Township are close to one another.

**Transport:** There is a daily long-distance bus, taking about eight hours, from Xining's Xiguan Bus Station to Dulan. Vehicles can be hired at the Dulan International Hunting Ground to go to the area of Kugri and Reshui. Telephone: (977) 232296.

**Lodging:** A room with an attached bathroom at the Dulan County Guesthouse costs from 100 yuan per night.

**Food:** The restaurants serve Muslim and Sichuan food at very reasonable prices.

**Season:** July and August are the best months.

**Advice:** Beware of altitude sickness and carry medicines and skin and lip moisturisers with you. When visiting or staying overnight with a Tibetan family or at a temple, the best gift is a hata, brick-tea or a bottle of barley wine, which are available in shops in the county town and along the highway.





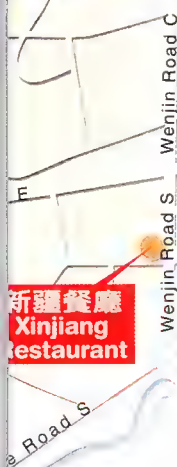
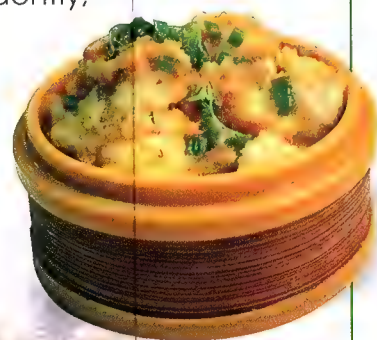
# Shenzhen Country-Wide Cuisine

*Photos & article by Shi Baoxiu*

Each area has its own cuisine. Whenever you travel, one of the best ways to feel the atmosphere of a new place is to try some of the local food.

If you happen to be in Shenzhen, you have a glorious opportunity to try a rich variety of delicacies from all over China in one place. Shenzhen, in southern Guangdong Province just across the border of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, has grown quickly into a modern city with a population of three million. Since about 95 percent of the city's residents are migrants from all over the country, the demand for home cooking is very strong. Consequently, restaurants with all kinds of cuisine have sprouted up in Shenzhen.

I spent five days wandering the streets and alleys of Shenzhen, testing my taste buds and collecting information. Here I share with you the information, hoping it can help you in a "taste tour" in Shenzhen.



## San Yuan Restaurant: Dumpling Banquet

This restaurant, simply a food stand selling dumplings seven years ago, has turned into a two-storey restaurant providing an unprecedented banquet of *jiaozi* (dumplings). It offers almost 100 varieties of dumplings, including steamed and boiled ones. Also served here are fermented grain mash, pickles in Sichuan and Shaanxi styles, and delicacies of the western regions of the country, making it a place satisfying both "aristocratic" and common people.

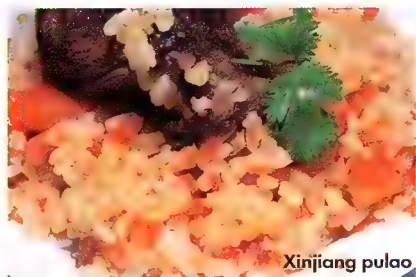
**Price:** Dumpling banquet: 68 to 880 yuan (according to quantity and variety)

**Address:** 56 Huafa Road North

**Tel:** (755) 335 7175, 335 9196



Northern-style snacks



Xinjiang pulao

## Xinjiang Restaurant: Nang and Lamb

Shenzhen has several restaurants with signs announcing "Muslim" or "Western Region" food, but the Xinjiang Restaurant found on the ground floor of the Xinjiang Office Building at Chunfeng Road serves the most typical Uygur-style cooking. The cooks here are all Uygurs and some waitresses are Uygur girls from Xinjiang's Ili. An eye-catching stove sits in front of the restaurant, where a bearded young Uygur man busily works around it. The *nang*, or Xinjiang pizza, is big or small, of different thickness. Its crispy texture and aroma can easily encourage patrons to eat more than necessary. Another delicious choice is the lamb *baozi*, or steamed bun. The restaurant serves many kinds of lamb dishes, including roast leg of lamb, roast whole lamb, and the unusual pulao rice with lamb chunks that is eaten with the fingers.

If you have a big appetite you can choose the lamb-*nang*, which is a large piece of stewed lamb between two pieces of *nang*. It has a strong flavour and pungent aroma. Or, you can try the Big Plate of Chicken, enough to satisfy four or five people. If you can't tolerate hot dishes, tell the waitress when you order.

**Prices:** Big Plate Chicken: 68 yuan; Lamb-nang: 60 yuan; Noodles with Lamb: 16 yuan; Pulao Lamb Rice: 12 yuan; Pulao Vegetable Rice: 8 yuan; Roast Leg of Lamb or Roast Whole Lamb: 116 yuan per kg (The latter two must be ordered in advance because of the time required to roast.)

**Address:** Xinjiang Office Building, Jinxing Garden, Chunfeng Road

**Tel:** (755) 511 0270, 130 0544 8633

## Xiao Luyang Anhui Restaurant: Ming-Style Bean Curd

As I leafed through the menu, the restaurant owner's wife spoke to me in Mandarin with a heavy Anhui accent. I spotted the Zhu Hongwu Bean Curd and remembered a popular *xiangsheng* (comic dialogue) which took place in Beijing. It told how Zhu Yuanzhang (who later became Emperor Hongwu), a poor boy, begged a beggar for some leftover soup containing bean curd and vegetable, which was jokingly given the name "Soup of Pearl, Jadeite and White Jade". The chef told me another version of the story. During the warring years, Zhu Yuanzhang fled to a peasant's home in Fengyang, Anhui. All the poor peasant had was eggs and a small piece of bean curd. He dipped the bean curd in the egg white, and deep fried it until it turned brown. Zhu was delighted and ate heartily. Years later, Zhu, the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), savoured his memory of the bean curd dish so much that he invited the peasant to the Imperial Palace to make it daily for him.

Another tempting dish here is Caishi preserved bean curd. Caishi is the place by the Yangtse River where Li Bai, a great Tang poet, fell into the water. Pieces of spiced and dried bean curd mixed with coriander are truly tantalising.

Braised Huangshan Frog is an extraordinary dish. This succulent frog, from the Mount Huangshan area, is bigger than normal. It is stewed with mushrooms and bamboo shoots, and has a gamy taste. Marinated chicken, duck and pig's knuckle are all excellent here. Also on the menu is the dark and chewy dog meat sausage, typical food of Anhui farmers.

**Price:** Between 20-30 yuan

**Address:** 12-14 Nanyuan Road

**Tel:** 136 0258 5168



Zhu Hongwu Bean Curd

## Xiao Tianchi: Li Liangui Meat-Filled Pancake

Meat-filled  
pancake



Though I first heard about Siping's famous Li Liangui Meat-Filled Pancake long ago, it was only in Shenzhen that I had the chance to savour it.

The chef sears the pancake on both sides in a pan till golden, then cuts a pocket into it. I watched in the kitchen, mouth watering, as the chef cut slices of lean and fatty roasted meat. One piece of each is stuffed into the pancake's pocket, along with a few strips of spring onion dipped in sweet bean paste. It was crisp, and the meat, aromatic and tender. The 100-year-old roasting method, using some special Chinese herbs, was invented by Li Liangui.

The owner of the Xiao Tianchi Restaurant, Mr. Wang, is a stocky fellow from Siping, Jilin Province in the Northeast. He said that most of his customers are local residents who come from the Northeast. However, this pancake has become popular among people from Guangdong and other provinces as well. The restaurant also serves inexpensive and delicious dishes such as braised pig's knuckles, braised spareribs and millet and date congee.

**Prices:** Roast meat: 80 yuan per kg; Pancake: 6 yuan each; Minced meat stuffing: 12 yuan per serving; Millet and date congee: 3 yuan per bowl; Braised pig's knuckle, spareribs: 15 yuan per serving

**Address:** 306 Huafa Tower, Zhenhua Road Central  
**Tel:** (755) 322 0692



Gourd End soup  
plus pancake

## Dongfang Shaanxi Restaurant: Lamb Soup with Pancakes

Who would think a restaurant in Shenzhen would have authentic local delicacies of Shaanxi? At the Dongfang Shaanxi Restaurant I anticipated a hearty meal of shredded pancakes in a huge bowl of lamb soup, with sweet pickled garlic, sesame oil and hot bean paste. The owner, Mr. Wen, said that the common tale of the "Hundred-Year-Old Soup" and the delicious meat-filled pancake was quite true. Besides the traditional lamb soup and pancakes, the restaurant offers over 30 varieties of dishes of Shaanxi cuisine, including dumplings, noodles with minced meat and persimmon cake. The unique and strangely-named Gourd End Soup (pig intestines in thick soup) on offer is said to have been invented by the renowned Tang-dynasty pharmacist, Sun Simiao.

Mr. Wen said that the famous Xu Family Wine Shop in Xi'an had been run in its early days by his uncle. He poured me a glass of Huanggui wine, and it was fragrant with a little sweet and sour taste. It complemented well the speciality, roast beef-filled pancake. The fresh, sweet-scented pancake and aromatic meat satisfied my desire for home cooking.

**Prices:** Lamb soup plus a pancake: 14 yuan; Gourd End soup plus a pancake: 15 yuan; Noodles: 5 yuan; Pork- or Beef-Filled Pancake: 5 yuan

**Address:** 125-126 Bading Street

**Tel:** (755) 224 9009

Its three branches are located in the Splendid China, 61 Aihua Street and Shekou Cultural Plaza in Shenzhen.

## Folk Vat Broth Restaurant: Savoury Broth of Jiangxi

This Jiangxi-flavour restaurant magically produces scores of bowls of fragrant, savoury broth in a waist-high ceramic vat. This unique broth, originated from Jiangxi, is available day and night in Shenzhen.

Slices of chicken, duck or fish are mixed with medical herbs and held in small ceramic covered pots, then put into a large vat layer by layer. The vat is covered with an iron lid and heated over a charcoal brazier for seven to eight hours. Since it is simmered a long time over a low fire, it acquires an unusually delicious taste.

Li Shimin, the founding emperor of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), is said to have often had this broth during his campaigns before ascending the throne. He later called on all housewives to make the broth for their men to make them strong and brave.



The vat stove for cooking Jiangxi soup

**Price:** Soups: 28 to 128 per pot (each pot of broth serves two to three people)

**Address:** 102 Fuhua Road

**Tel:** (755) 339 0107



Steamed Wuchang Fish

## Hua Zhi Cheng Hubei Restaurant: Wuchang Fish and Lotus Soup

Hubei people are believed to be more capable than others. It is true at least when referring to cooking. The Hua Zhi Cheng Hubei Restaurant in Shenzhen serves typical Hubei cuisine, which uses little oil or heavy seasonings. Many of its dishes use the famous delicacy of Hubei, the Wuchang fish, which is cooked in various ways, with the steamed style making a particularly tender and delectable dish. The fish arrive fresh by air directly from Wuchang. The lotus soup is a heavenly treat too. Originated from the lotus-producing area around Wuhan, it contains large crispy chunks of lotus root and tender meat. Another common Hubei dish is the hotpot chicken broth. In this restaurant, though you cannot see the scene of hundreds of blackened hotpots cooked over stoves like that in the back lanes in Wuhan, you can satisfy your appetite with this delicious bubbling broth all the same. The restaurant also serves wild duck from Honghu Lake, pan-fried *diaozi* fish, rice-coated steamed taro and famous local snacks such as hot dried noodles and bean-curd sheets.

**Prices:** Steamed Wuchang Fish: 45 yuan per half kg; Lotus soup: 18 yuan; Rice-coated Steamed Taro: 18 yuan; Air-dried meat: 28 yuan; Roast Honghu Lake Wild Duck: 48 yuan; Pan-fried *Diaozi*: 28 yuan; Hotpot Chicken Broth: 15 yuan  
**Address:** 4 Tongxin Road South  
**Tel:** (755) 224 7685

## Pan Family Hunan Restaurant: Steamed Air-Dried Meats

Hunan cuisine has become increasingly popular in Shenzhen since 1995, when Hunan migrants had taken root in the city. The Hunan cuisine is most well-known for its characteristic air-dried preserved fish and meats, including rabbit, chicken, duck and pork. The second big characteristic is "hot". Peppers, red, yellow and white, are a must in most dishes.

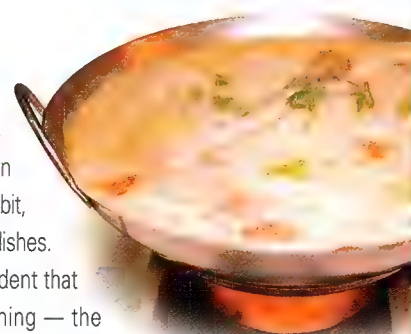
Miss Yan became the manager of the Pan Family Hunan Restaurant just over a year ago. She is very confident that her restaurant will do well to become "King of Hunan Cuisine". She initiated an important reform in dining — the customer can dictate the degree of "hotness" in a dish. Most customers from Hunan, Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan and certain northern provinces like the food very hot, while the southern ones usually prefer milder versions that leave the original meaty

**Prices:** Steamed Fish Head with Green Pepper: 18 yuan; Steamed Spicy Dried Bean Curd: 15 yuan; Imperial Concubine Bean Curd: 28 yuan; Golden Carp with Sliced Turnip: 18 yuan; Bean Curd Stewed with Carp Eggs: 32 yuan; Shredded Duck with Ginger: 25 yuan; Stewed Pork: 20 yuan

**Address:** 109 Huafa Road North  
**Tel:** (755) 324 8561

taste intact.

The stewed pork, a dish prepared by cooking and simmering pork with soy sauce and sugar, which Mao Zedong had doted on, is very tender and aromatic, yet not greasy. The dishes of a steamed mixture of air-dried meats, air-dried shredded rabbit with white pepper, and sliced duck with ginger are all unique. Its two rich broth dishes, one cooked with bean curd and carp eggs and the other of golden carp stewed with sliced turnip, are both characteristic and linger in one's mouth.



Golden carp stewed with white turnip



## Yu Yang Xuan Restaurant: Four-in-One Dining

The Yu Yang Xuan (Fish and Lamb Studio) Restaurant is a relative newcomer on the food street of Bagua. This "black horse" attracts diners with its "four-in-one" cooking style. Each table on the ground and first floors, and even on the outside pavement, has a peculiar type of hotpot that resembles a pagoda. This amazing pot has four layers for cooking in various ways: the bottom is a pot for boiling; the second layer is flat for roasting meat; the third layer is used for stir frying; and the top is a shining little steamer.

The main type of food served here is fish and lamb, and some medicinal herbs are added according to the season, for flavour as well as nutrition.

The best way to eat here is to let the waitress order a set meal according to the number of people in your party.

**Prices:** Set meal for four to five people: 166 yuan; Fish, lamb or lamb kidney: 15-40 yuan per serving

**Address:** 8 Bagua Road One  
**Tel:** (755) 226 0269



Various wild mushrooms

## Ye Shan Jun Restaurant: Yunnan Delicacies

All the mushrooms served in this restaurant are collected from the forests on the Dêqên Plateau in Yunnan, an area that resembles a Shangri-La. The mushrooms have many unusual names that match their unusual shapes. The ox-liver mushroom looks like a dried ox liver; the wax gourd one is oblong. The golden trumpet, broom, black tiger's paw and goose egg mushrooms all fit perfectly their assigned names. Whatever shape they come in, they are most nutritious and mouth-watering.

Mr. Chen, the owner of the restaurant, spoke excitedly of *songrong* mushroom, the best of the wild mushrooms. He brings in the *songrong* mushrooms from Yunnan by air, since they are the most excellent quality. They should be fresh because the taste is best on the day they are picked. The most delicious and nutritious way to eat them is to simply dip them quickly into the boiling hotpot; the hotpot water becomes an extremely delicious soup. The chicken broth with assorted mushrooms of a dozen varieties that I tried was so wonderful that I sipped it like good tea or wine to relish its taste. I wondered just how I could go back to cultivated mushrooms after this.

**Prices:** Hotpot base: 18-38 yuan (depending on size of pot);  
Wild mushrooms (per serving): Songrong, gongjun or  
Queen Bamboo 28 yuan; jicong or ox liver 22 yuan

**Address:** 47 Dongyuan Road

**Tel:** (755) 206 1919

## Chongqing Hotpot Restaurant: Bandit Chicken and Despot Rabbit

Though the names may sound threatening, these dishes are simply village cooking from the rural areas of Chongqing. The stress of such cooking is not on colour or presentation but on taste. They are served in large quantity and go very well with rice. Chickens and rabbits



Bandit chicken

**Prices:** Bandit Chicken: 68 yuan; Despot Rabbit: 68 yuan ; Tongnan Tai'an  
Sliced Fish: 20 yuan per serving; Dazu Youting Carp: 30 yuan per pot;  
Stewed Chicken and Taro: 58 yuan

**Address:** 16-17 Nanyuan Road

(These dishes are also available in other Chongqing hotpot restaurants.)

are slaughtered on the spot, cooked immediately and served whole in a big pot. These popular dishes are available in most Chongqing hotpot restaurants in Shenzhen.

### Shenzhen's Dining Spots and Cuisine



\* Beijing Dong Lai Shun Hotpot Restaurant is well-known for its lamb dishes; branches have been opened on Wenjin Road Central, Lianhua Road North and Huangmu Terrace.

\* Beijing Quan Ju De Roast Duck Restaurant, Shennan Road Central, is one of the best places for Peking duck.

\* Sichuan cuisine and hotpots, the second most popular after Cantonese cuisine, can be found everywhere.

\* Hunan cuisine ranks the third most popular in Shenzhen. All food streets have Hunan cuisine restaurants.

\* Northeastern *Jiaozi* (dumplings) restaurants are available throughout the city. These types of restaurants usually serve other delicacies like braised spareribs, pickled cabbage, stewed chicken and straw-hat pancake.

\* Guilin rice noodle restaurants are more numerous than grocery stores in Shenzhen. Beware these rice noodles are served very hot. The best part is

that they are cheap, usually no more than 6 yuan a bowl. Recently, Changsha rice noodles have also appeared on the scene.

\* The Pastry King Restaurant (Mian Dian Wang) tops the Chinese fast food in popularity. It has branches on almost every street, offering all kinds of local delicacies from all over the country.

\* Huaiyang cuisine exerts little influence in Shenzhen. One restaurant is located in the Jiangsu Hotel on Fuhua Street in Gangxia. Another, called Yi Jiang Nan (Missing Yangtse Delta) Restaurant, is on Hongli Road, diagonally opposite the Shenzhen Library. (Tel: 243 6000)

\* Shandong cuisine is not well represented in Shenzhen either. Best choice is the Kong Shan Tang (Confucius Kitchen) located in the Grand View Garden Food Court, 7 Yijing Road. (Tel: 552 3087)

\* The Hulun Bur Restaurant, serving Inner Mongolian whole roast lamb, roast leg of lamb and lamb banquet, is located in the Jindi Grand View Garden Food Court on Shazhui Road on the western side of the Huanggang entry port. (Tel: 386 8873)

# Folk Embroidery of Shanxi and Henan

*Photos & article by Baoxiu*

Folk embroidery has a long history and has been popular all over China since ancient times. It has evolved over time, encompassing changes in colours, fabrics and designs. The distinct embroideries of the southern provinces of Suzhou, Hangzhou, Hunan and Sichuan became known in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) as the "Four Famous Embroideries" of China.

The old embroideries done in the rural areas of Shanxi and Henan provinces may not be able to compare with China's four famous embroideries, but they have both merit and beauty. Today, some collectors travel from village to village in the countryside, gathering such excellent works of art done by ordinary country women.

I visited one of these collectors, Peng Lixin, a man from Taiyuan, capital of Shanxi. Peng amassed a large collection through painstaking work over a period of 20 years. In his house, he has a display of these folk embroideries, mainly from Shanxi and Henan. They were created in various sizes, shapes and colours, and mostly belong to the period from the end of the Qing Dynasty to the early years of the Republic in the 1920s. Some are from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), and others are modern ones. Among the ancient works there are treasures

of high officials and rich merchant families as well as items from ordinary



rural households.

The embroidered purses that are made in many different shapes are a good example of Shanxi embroidery. It used to be a tradition in central and northern China that a bride's virtue and proficiency was judged by her talent in embroidery, particularly on the clothes and ornaments of her bridegroom. At the same time, the clothes and ornaments of the children showed the capability and loving care of the mother. Consequently, many exquisitely embroidered purses were produced. They were embroidered by country women in their prime, when they prepared their own dowry, full of imagination about their future lives, or as a token to their lovers. Very often, the young woman would prepare an embroidered purse as a betrothal gift for her future husband, and a young man would show off his purse to prove what a clever and capable wife he would marry.

The purses in Peng's collection are made in different designs, but all have a strong indication of the habits and loves of the people living on the banks of the Yellow River. Some purses were made purely for adornment. Others were made to carry silver or coins, or to serve as a stomacher as well as a purse. When a man wore such a purse, stomacher, or decorative chest panel, it served well as a reminder of his wife and her love.

The shapes and sizes of the purses vary too. Some of them are round or square, others are circular, some longer, some shorter. Some are as big as a gourd, some are as small as a gold ingot. The purses are also made for wearing in different ways. Some are supposed to be tied in the front or around the waist as a safe way to carry money, while others can be folded into a small and exquisite treasure hidden in the chest pocket or sleeve. Still, there are some made to be worn as an adornment.

The materials used to make these purses are of various qualities, from home-made cotton cloth to silk and satin, and are of various colours such as black, blue, red, white or purple. The embroidery on the cloth was done with contrasting colourful threads.

As local opera is popular in Shanxi, many Shanxi embroidered purses copied the characters in classic operas. Traditional local decorative patterns are also used in their designs. The needlework shows the complicated technique, included plain stitch, coiling-fan, gilt-edged, piling-silk and cloth-patch. Some of the purses even have pearls, precious stones, crystals or glass added to make them more attractive.



4



5



6

1. An embroidered belt from western Henan
2. Embroideries using traditional opera characters
3. Two purses not of typical Shanxi design that may have been left by Silk Road traders (by Xi Feng)
4. Pattern of a Qing-dynasty theatrical costume (by Xi Feng)
5. Purses with folk-style embroidery (by Xi Feng)
6. A man's purse in stomacher style





# Quest for Autumn Colours in Altay

From September until then there was no sign of autumn in the city streets, and even in rich autumnal colours. In order to reach the destination, the Altay Prefecture in Xinjiang, we had to drive through northern Siberia and Gansu Province. As we left Shijiazhuang behind us, the sun rained and the sky cleared, and the sun came out brightly. On our last morning in Lanzhou, we enjoyed the sunrise over the ancient gate tower of Pingyuan, the west end of the Great Wall. Further west, we entered Xinjiang.



off a tap. The next second, a ray of red sunlight pierced the dark clouds and dyed the earth golden red as if it was on fire. It was an unbelievably dramatic scene that sprang up into our sight. Being photographers, we halted the jeep, jumped out and set up our tripods. Beyond the fiery red tree branches, a clearly defined rainbow appeared. There was no time to admire it; we quickly clicked away on the camera shutters before the rainbow gradually faded into the dusk.

## The Spirited Baihaba Villagers

We had a good night's rest in the town of Habahe, then went on to Baihaba Village the following morning. This village borders Kazakhstan, where the scenery is picturesque and people follow a simple and honest way of life. There are not many people in the village, but they have the distinction of having the national record in consumption of liquor — half a ton per person per year. The other characteristic feature of Baihaba is that all its houses are built of wood in a typical European village style. It was a gorgeous picture in the early morning. The sun's rays passed over the snow-covered Altay Mountains onto the village. The birch woods turned into patches of gold and a small stream meandered in the golden sunlight. As smoke rose from the chimneys, cattle and sheep began to plod out of their pens.

That day, we also went to photograph the birch forest in the border area. It was so beautiful that we returned quite late in the evening to the PLA border company's camp. Since dinner was over and we were very hungry, we had no choice but to content ourselves with the leftovers of the soldiers' dinners.

## Enchanted World of Kanas Lake

We travelled through the night to Kanas Lake at the foot of the Altay Mountains. The southern base of these mountains is covered with large expanses of birch forests. The Kanas River and Hemu River, with their clear waters flowing from the Altay Mountains into the Ertix River, form a semi-circle. The peaks of the Altay were solemnly snow-capped. In this thinly populated area, the vegetation is abundant and well preserved. The birch leaves had turned yellow, and the maple leaves, red. As the autumn wind stirred, the whole mountain shivered in a splash of golden and red colours like an enchanted world. We stepped carefully while taking pictures, lest we hurt a young shoot or a blade of grass and disrupt the serenity and perfection of nature.

The Kanas River flows peacefully through the mountains. The leaves of the tall birches constantly rustled in the wind. This area's extreme beauty kept us there for over a week, and still, we were unwilling to leave.

1. Autumn seems to have turned the land into flames.
2. Red leaves announce the coming of autumn.
3. Reeds growing on a blue lake
4. Rainbow in Altay

## Tips for the Traveller

### • Transport

There are direct flights from major cities in China to Ürümqi. Trains run regularly from Lanzhou in Gansu to Ürümqi along the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway.

Buses run daily at irregular times from Ürümqi to Fuyun, Habahe, Altay and Burqin. There are no buses to Kanas Lake; you have to drive your own vehicle or hire a taxi. A cheaper way to get there is to take the bus from Ürümqi to Habahe or Burqin first, then hire a taxi from there. Jeep rental costs 500-700 yuan a day. The price may be higher if the weather or road conditions are poor.

### • Food and Lodging

Ürümqi offers a wide choice in food and lodging. Among the better places are several four- and five-star hotels such as Yindu Hotel, Haide Hotel and Xinjiang Holiday Inn, and some two- and three-star hotels such as City Hotel, Overseas Chinese Hotel and Wangdefu Hotel.

The Kanas Mountain Villa at the Kanas Lake area provides food and lodging. A double room costs 300 yuan a day. You can also choose to stay in a Mongolian yurt. The cost of a bed in a yurt is about 10-30 yuan.

### • Main Scenic Attractions

Altay City: Birch Forest Park, Small Eastern Gully Scenic Area, Zaskawigayixia Pasture, Kormqi stone figures and coffins and cliff pictures of Handhat Township.

Lake Kanas Scenic Area: Fish Watching Pavilion and the Minor Kanas.

### • Best Season

September and October are the best autumn months.





## The Route to Autumn Colours

Our route in Xinjiang took us first through Hami, once an important caravan stop of the old Silk Road, and on through the boundless desert towards Ürümqi. On the way, we visited the Little Devil's Town at Wubu, Flaming Mountain of Turpan, Lord Su's Pagoda and ruins of the ancient towns of Jiaohe and Gaochang. We set out from Ürümqi on the road to the east of the Junggar Basin, passing through Fukang and Jimsar. All the way along this route we could see the Gurbantünggüt Desert extending as far as the horizon. There were neither trees nor grass anywhere, only numerous rocks of various sizes that produced strange sounds when a fierce wind blew. As the stars and bright moon appeared in the cloudless sky, the only noise we heard was the wind and the jeep's motor. The straight highway led us past Alatube and Karatünggü in the darkness of the night, and into Fuyun (Koktokay), our first stop in the Altay area, in the early morning.

## Silicified Wood, Tree Fossils

Fuyun is a county that borders Mongolia, in which the Mongolian, Uygur, Kazak, Hui and Han peoples live in mixed communities. The following day, we arrived at Korte where herdspeople live in winter. It is said that Koktokay and Korte are the richest places in the Altay area because Koktokay produces gold and Korte is known far and wide for its precious stones. The area is one of the coldest in China. The winter temperature may drop to 53°C below zero. There are silicified trees everywhere. The tree trunks, branches and leaves have long become ossified, but the annual rings and bark are still clearly visible. In some of the cracks in these trees, tender green young plants have taken root, bringing life to the fossils.

## Unpredictable Desert Weather

Leaving Fuyun behind, we headed for Habahe County, which is the most northerly county in Xinjiang. We followed the Ertix River



towards the northwest. This river flows from the Altay Mountains into Lake Zajsan in Kazakhstan. The scenery along the river is typically central Asian and very similar to many pictures painted by Russian landscape painters. It became one of our most favourite places to take photographs.

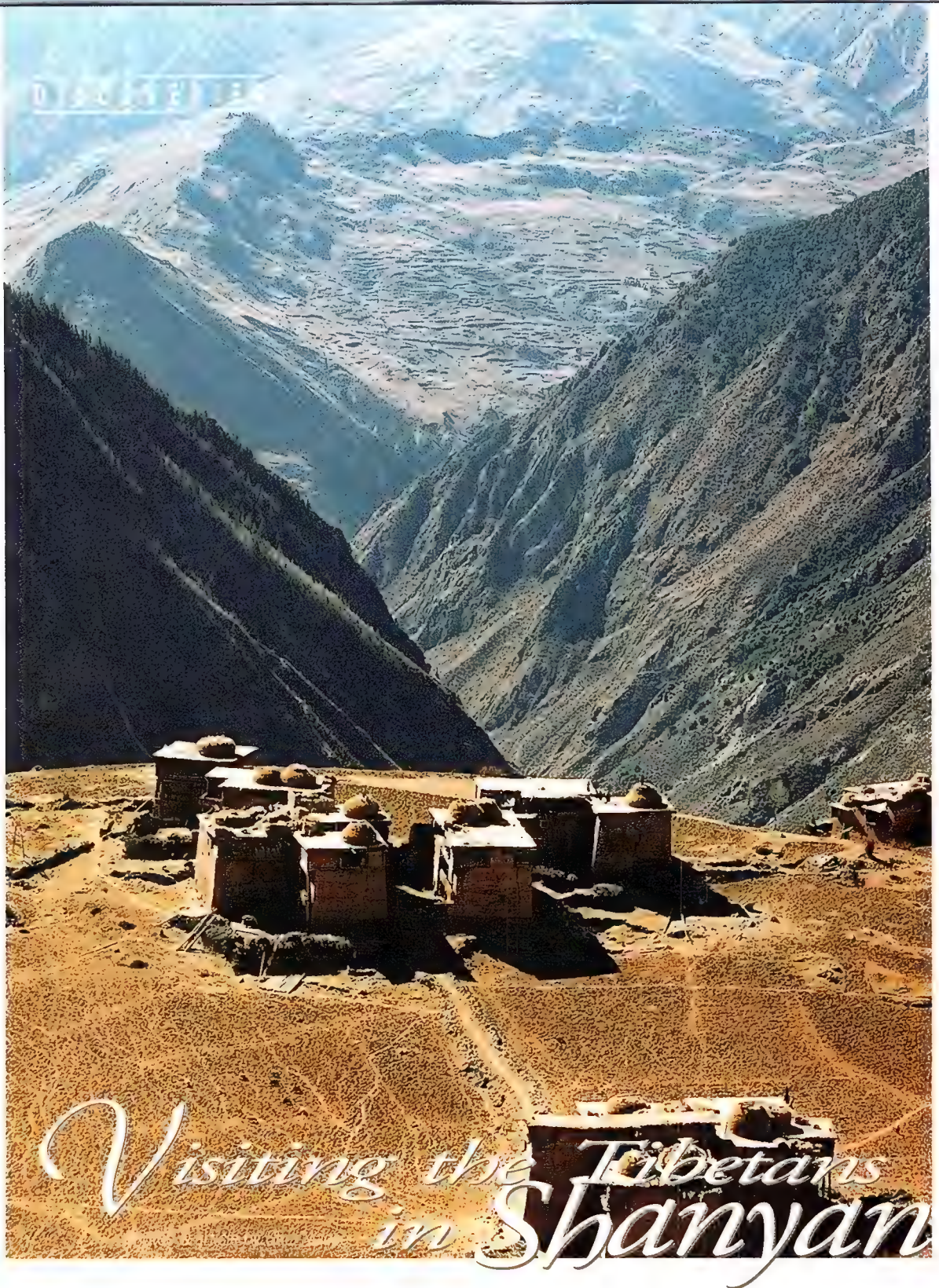
Here, we learned firsthand how unpredictable the weather in the desert can be. A sudden gust of wind from Siberia brought many dark, moisture-laden clouds and rain drops mixed with hailstones the size of pigeon's eggs pelted down on us. It became so dark that we almost lost our direction. We packed up our cameras and drove off, but on the way, the rain stopped abruptly as if someone had turned

**Previous page**

**Main picture: The leaves turn crimson red in autumn**  
**Insert: Cattle grazing on the Altay Grassland**

- 1. Baihaba Village in early morning**
- 2. The charming Minor Kanas**





*Shanyan is located on the bank of the Jinsha River (the upper reaches of the Yangtze) in Baiyü County in the Garzê Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in northwestern Sichuan. On the opposite side of the river is Tibet. The geographic condition of Shanyan well reflects its name, which, in Tibetan, means "rough terrain". The roaring Jinsha River and the rolling high mountains seal it off from the outside world, and the virgin forest — which is believed to be the largest ever found on the upper reaches of Jinsha River — adds more mystery to it.*



### Crossing Dangerous Terrain

Though the highway extends just 56 km from the county town of Baiyü to Shanyan, it passes over the 5,000-metre-high Dalong (Big Dragon) Snow Mountain, and runs through primitive forests, bushland and grassland, and rocky hills. Moreover, it spans several temperature zones and makes 51 sudden turns.

Shaking with fear, I rode the best russet horse in the township along a trail carved in sheer cliffs at an altitude of 2,000 metres high above the roaring Jinsha River. A local Tibetan had fallen with his horse into the river just a few days ago here. I said a prayer. At that moment, I realised I wasn't the hero I thought I was. What inspired me was that I was among the first group of journalists who ever visited Shanyan.

There are all kinds of stories about Shanyan. Some mention hardy local people

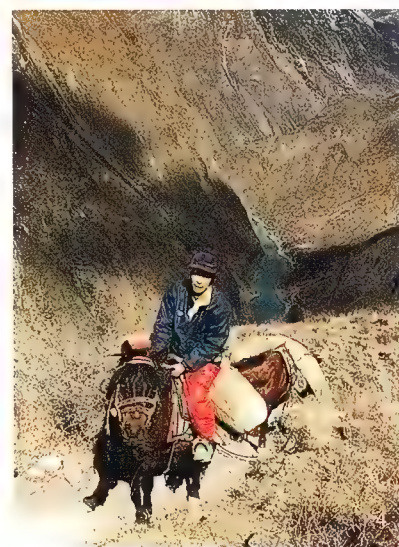
and pillbox homes with numerous embrasures. The local people live under a system called geba, which plays the role as a clan or a tribe. Basically a patriarchal society, each geba consists of eight to 100 families. Other stories say the geba members get their income mainly from pilfering and plundering, and the best thieves are the most respected.

The Qing Dynasty records stipulate: "This tiny area had defied imperial rule for over 200 years by relying on the dangerous terrain and the bravery of its people. To bring them under control, the court has sent expeditions on several occasions." Historians called Shanyan people "an uncivilised barbaric tribe that defies the court". It was not until October 1910, near the end of the Qing Dynasty, that Zhao Erfeng, a court official for border affairs in Sichuan and Yunnan, sent Fu Song with five army units to conquer Shanyan. With aid from Dorji Sengge, the Tibetan chieftain of Dêgê, this independent tribe was finally subdued and the Shanyan Committee was established. Real stability in Shanyan was only achieved after 1949, but it remains one

of the poorest areas in Baiyü County.

### The Mysterious Geba

In Sêdê Village, we found 59-year-old Jizhu, who once served as the chieftain of the Xiage geba. Judging by his clothing, he now seems little different from the others. His Xiage geba is relatively large and comprises over 100 families scattered in Baiyü, Batang and Litang counties of Sichuan Province and Gonjo County in



1. A settlement in Shanyan
2. Shanyan people use boats made of ox hide to cross the Jinsha River.
3. The society of Shanyan is basically a world of males.
4. The author on his way to Shanyan



Tibet. Jizhu said the male chieftain, who must be fair and intelligent, is elected by all the geba members. Normally, the chieftain has no privileges and shares the wealth equally with other members. In disputes, he becomes the mediator, and in battles

with other tribes, he is the commander. Under the Xiage geba there are nine sub-branches, who come under the chieftain's command during a major event.

Jizhu admitted there used to be frequent fights between different gebas in the Shanyan area, mostly from animosity between clans, entanglements over marriage and grassland, robbery and plundering. While people who died peacefully were cremated on auspicious dates one or two years after death, those who died in the fights were quickly cremated. Their ashes were usually mixed with mud and put into piles of Mani stones, or scattered over rivers or grassland with flowers, or put by mountain cliffs with wonderful scenery. The cremation site was decided by divination; it could be by their homes or where they died.

Ground and water burials are also practised in this area, but not the sky burial that would be expected in areas inhabited

by Tibetans. We also saw the unknown and peculiar practice of tree burial. A child who dies before age 13 is bound up in a foetal posture and put into a small wooden trunk. Then, by divination, an auspicious time and place are chosen to hang the trunk on a tree. Since certain trees are commonly used, they look like beehives. It is done to prevent the young ghost from coming back to take the life of another child.

### **Different Tibetan Customs**

The lamasery in Shanyan is the smallest and most simple temple I ever saw in a compact community of Tibetans. It is much like a residential building. Though most Shanyan people believe in the Nyima school of the Red Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, Shanyan people seldom invite Lamas to chant sutras for them, as is required for religious events in other areas. Instead, they do it themselves while drinking. In old times, before setting off for a battle, all



adult geba males would gather to slaughter an ox, drink and chant sutras. After drinking, they took an oath. Then, with a string of prayer beads or a pebble, they practised divination to predicate their luck in the battle. Divination is also used to decide the auspicious dates for sowing and harvesting.

Through Jizhu we also learned that unlike other areas inhabited by Tibetans, who drink a home-made milky white liquor with low alcoholic content, one-third of the qingke barley produced in Shanyan is used to produce a strong liquor, and every family brews their own liquor every year. The dance gatherings with drinking, held at regular intervals, have long been a tradition.

## A World of Males

The geba is basically the world of males. The women, at the lowest status, have no power at all. Unless absolutely necessary, they do not join in any battles. In the past the women had to use the cowshed as a delivery room and could only return to their rooms when the baby was a month old. Until then, they were not allowed to come near fires or kitchens. A girl's marriage is decided by her father, while the geba chieftain has the final say. If a wife gives birth to two or three girls, her husband has the right to take a concubine.

## A Geba with Three Chieftains

During our stay in Shanyan, we also met Dorji Wengxiong, the chieftain of the Xiaguo geba. Comprising over 50 households, this geba has three chieftains, with Dorji Wengxiong holding the greatest power and having the final say in all important matters. He was appointed by the previous chieftain, who happened to be his uncle. Usually, an election or notification ritual takes place together with the burial ceremony for the previous chieftain. After the deceased chieftain's last words are announced, the newly appointed one accepts something symbolic from him, such as a sutra book, a dart or a small Buddhist statue.

The Xiaguo geba holds two main gatherings each year. One, lasting five days, takes place in early July at the holy mountain of Zongguo. Everyone takes part in the horse racing, running competition, wrestling and tug-of-war, and the winners are presented with awards. The other is held in November at the chieftain's home and every household must send at least one member. Apart from banqueting, singing and dancing, Dorji Wengxiong gives a summary of the situation within the geba and settles disputes among the members. This geba stipulates that every quarrel be settled by a fine of 200 yuan and a fight, by a 600 yuan fine. The money is paid by the guilty to the wronged. The expenses of the gathering are shared by all the households. Although Dorji Wengxiong inherited his position, he does not enjoy any privilege. But, when his family's life is hard, people



1. The lamasery built among residential houses in Shanyan
2. It is the custom to bury a child in a tree to prevent the ghost taking the life of another child.
3. A Shanyan woman
4. A gallant man



## THE MYSTERIOUS ORIGIN

*It is certain now that prior to the Guge Kingdom there was the Shang Shung Kingdom, which Tang-dynasty records called Yangtong. Historical documents say this ancient kingdom was located precisely where ruins of the Guge Kingdom were found. The "mysterious Shang Shung" has been a popular topic in studies of Tibetan culture. Most scholars have reached a consensus that Bon, the native religion of Tibet, originated from the Ngari plateau at the time of the Shang Shung Kingdom. Although the Shang Shung culture is still mysterious, it is believed that its influence is significant in the Tibetan culture that comprises both agricultural and nomadic branches.*

might volunteer their help.

Talking about their ancestors, Dorji Wengxiong said, "We came from areas on the upper reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo River in present-day Ngari Prefecture in Tibet. We are Tibetans and not local Kangba people. Our father was a celestial monkey and mother was the Queen Monkey, and our king was Prince Dong. Later, the five brothers of the Ngari family separated and our branch failed to get a share of the land.

Dorji Wengxiong has a small gilded figure of the Buddha, the token of his position. He took great care of it, wrapping it in several pieces of silk. When I said I would like to take a picture of it, Dorji quickly took out a white hata to put under it. If this Buddha statue really came from Ngari, it might indeed be a Shang Shung relic.



## Pillbox Homes

All the homes in Shanyan are four-storey structures in pillbox style, comprising six large rooms. They appear similar to the government buildings of some remote counties on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, though here the first floor is a shed for domestic animals, the second is the kitchen, while the living rooms are on the third. The top level is a storeroom. The rooftop terrace offers a clear view all around. Movable log ladders link the floors, and once removed, it is easy to defend from inside. The home with walls one metre thick is indeed like a stronghold. It may take four or five years to complete one such building.

Dorji Wengxiong said that the houses built by their forefathers were much smaller and looked more like temples. They have slowly evolved to the present style due to frequent fights between the various gebas.

## Lake Spirits

Several lakes, including Cuola, Yongcuo and Ruo'eculolang, form part of the magnificent natural landscape in Shanyan. The local people say that a kind of spirit lives in them, which they call "water ox". In winter, these monsters make a sound like a mooing ox, but louder and lasting two to three minutes each time. In the mornings, it lasts one to two hours. The residents consider them as supernatural spirits and are quite used to the sound. The "water ox" is said to be white and look somewhat like a boa constrictor. Yet nobody has ever seen one.

As we left, some Shanyan people, half of them women wearing caps with five red stars, were voluntarily doing maintenance work on the new highway.

*Translated by Z. G. Li*

1. A distant view of the area of Shanyan
2. Crops are dried on the roof of the house.
3. Dorji Wengxiong with the statue of Buddha, the symbol of his power
4. Lake Yongcuo, where the "water ox" lives



## Tips for the Traveller

### ▼ Transportation

Basically, it is very difficult to get to Shanyan, even if you hire a car. Driving from Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province, there are two choices:

- 1) Follow the southern line of the Sichuan-Tibet Highway to Yidun, from where a highway leads to Gari and on to Shanyan; beware that road collapse often happens on this route.
- 2) Follow the northern line of the Sichuan-Tibet Highway to Garzê, and turn to the highway from Baiyü to Gari, and then the highway to Shanyan. The route between Gari and Shanyan is dangerous and subject to frequent landslides.

Buses run regularly from Chengdu to Kangding, the capital of the Garzê Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. There are weekly buses from Kangding to Baiyü, but from there continuing your journey depends on luck. There are no scheduled buses and few passing vehicles. You may be able to rent a local vehicle or a horse, or travel on foot. Fortunately, people in Baiyü are hospitable and offer help readily.

### ▼ Climate

Shanyan Township has a hot and dry climate. On the banks of the Jinsha River the temperature is a bit higher than the township seat, which is located 3,000 metres above sea level. Since getting to Shanyan requires passing snow-capped peaks at altitudes over 5,000 metres, you need warm clothing even in summer.

### ▼ Food and Lodging

Along the way into Baiyü, there are plenty of restaurants offering Sichuan cuisine. Once you leave Baiyü, only Tibetan food, such as tsampa (roasted qingke barley flour), beef, mutton and buttered tea, offered by local inhabitants is available. You can also bring your own cooking equipment and food.

There are plenty of hotels and hostels of various grades on the route to Baiyü. In Baiyü, the Baiyü Hotel is reasonable, with standard rooms and good service. Outside Baiyü there are virtually no hostels. In Gari and Shanyan, lodging is only available in the township offices or with local families. Camping is also possible.

- ▼ **Special Note:** Since there are no public stores and no electricity, you must be properly prepared before leaving Baiyü for a trip like this.



# The Magic of Jiuzhaigou

Photos & article by Sodlanggrashi

*Jiuzhaigou (Nine-Village Valley) in northern Sichuan Province is a photographer's dream. The three sections of this Y-shaped valley each has its distinctive attractions. Although the area abounds in magical scenes that include over 100 highland lakes, waterfalls, springs, streams and forests, it had been virtually unknown as a tourist destination. Now on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the place has been firmly put on the map in the world's spotlight.*

Before you even set foot in the valley, a scenic wonder is already there to greet you. Ganhaizi is a pastureland several kilometres from the actual Jiuzhaigou site. Here it is possible to get beautiful shots of the true and plain natural scenery — herders' tents and herds of cattle and flocks of sheep grazing on the grassland. If you want to get some exciting photos, sometimes you can negotiate to pay the herdsmen to make the animals move across the pastures.

One of the first lakes you come to in Shuzheng Gully, the main part of the valley, is Luwei (Reed) Lake. This semi-marshland lake with plenty of thick reeds is home to numerous wild ducks and water birds. There are many places along this 1,375-metre-long lake where you can use a long lens to get unobtrusive pictures of the birds and fowl. If you take pictures in the mornings or evenings when the light is not too strong, you will also capture a sense of the wilderness.

Entering the Rize Gully, one arm of the Y-shaped valley, you soon come to the Jinghai (Mirror Lake). Like its name suggests, the lake is simply a mirror reflecting all the clouds, trees and hills around it. This is a great place to get poetic pictures all year round. The trees entwined by wisteria at the edge of the lake conjure up mystical images, which can be enjoyed even without a camera.

The Wuhua (Five-Flower) Lake further up the gully is one of the most popular places, particularly in autumn when the colours seem beyond the range of nature's spectrum. Apart from the colourful foliage covering the mountains, the water is a dream world, mixing calcified deposits with tree branches. This rare artistic gem is a





favourite with photographers and there are many good spots for taking pictures. Near the upper reaches of the lake by the highway you can get a panoramic view of the water. To get clear pictures of what's beneath the surface, however, you will have to go to the other end of the lake.

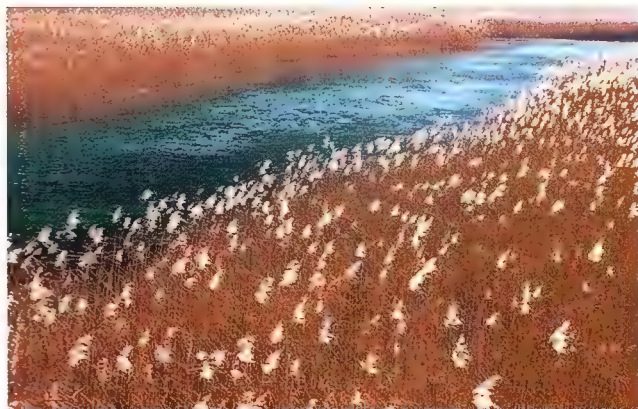
To appreciate and take pictures of some mystical tree branches, stop next at the Jianzhu (Arrow Bamboo) Lake. There are several sites here where you can see fresh vegetation growing mysteriously out of withered branches that are poking up through the surface of the water. This phenomenon occurs at the Mirror and Five-Flower lakes as well, but it is hard to find a good position at those lakes to take pictures.

At the far end of the gully, the Caohai (Grass Lake) is famous for its grass gently swaying in the lake. This long and narrow lake is 2,910 metres above sea level and its lower end borders the Tian'e (Swan) Lake. It offers sensational views in all four seasons.

The Wucui (Multi-Colour) Pond, the jewel of Jiuzhaigou, is in the Zechawa Gully on the other arm of the Y. The marvellous colours are the result of the large quantities of algae and travertine deposits below the surface of the water. The blues and greens are a dazzling sight in the bright sunshine. No one with a camera can resist the temptation to take some pictures. You may take the same photos as everyone else here, but when you get back home, your photos will be the talk of the town.



*Translated by F. Huang*





# DAZU ROCK CARVINGS

## A TREASURE-TROVE OF HUMAN CULTURAL HERITAGE

In Dazu County, 81 km west of Chongqing, there are numerous caves hewn into the cliffs that contain spectacular carvings representing mainly Buddhist culture. Seventy-five groups of the Dazu rock carvings, including 50,000 images and 100,000-word inscriptions, have been selected as protected cultural relics. At the mountains of Baoding, Beishan, Nanshan, Shizhuan and Shimen, visitors can find the best and the largest carvings in Dazu, with the richest contents and the most supreme craftsmanship.



A key item of cultural relics under state protection, Dazu has also recently earned the world's recognition. On December 1, 1999, Dazu was formally designated one of the UNESCO's World Heritage sites, making it China's second site featuring grotto art chosen by UNESCO after the Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang, Gansu Province.

The creation of rock carvings in Dazu began in the early Tang Dynasty (618-907), going through the Five Dynasties (907-960) and flourishing in the Song Dynasty (960-1279), and ended in the Qing (1644-1911). A representative of the late period of grotto art of northern China, Dazu rock carvings absorbed the essences of the past masterpieces while achieving a breakthrough in aspects such as the choice of subject matter, artistic form, sculptural skill and aesthetic concepts.

The Dazu rock carvings have distinguished themselves with their extensive coverage of Buddhism that includes almost every single detail of the Buddhist scriptures. There is also a harmonious blending of the Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian beliefs. Remarkable for their striking folk colours, the carvings also reflect the change in grotto art style and the ordinary people's religious beliefs of each specific period. Dazu has not only become a significant cultural treasure-trove and an important component of China's grotto art development, but also composes the most brilliant chapter of the world's stone carving art history from the 9th to mid-13th century.

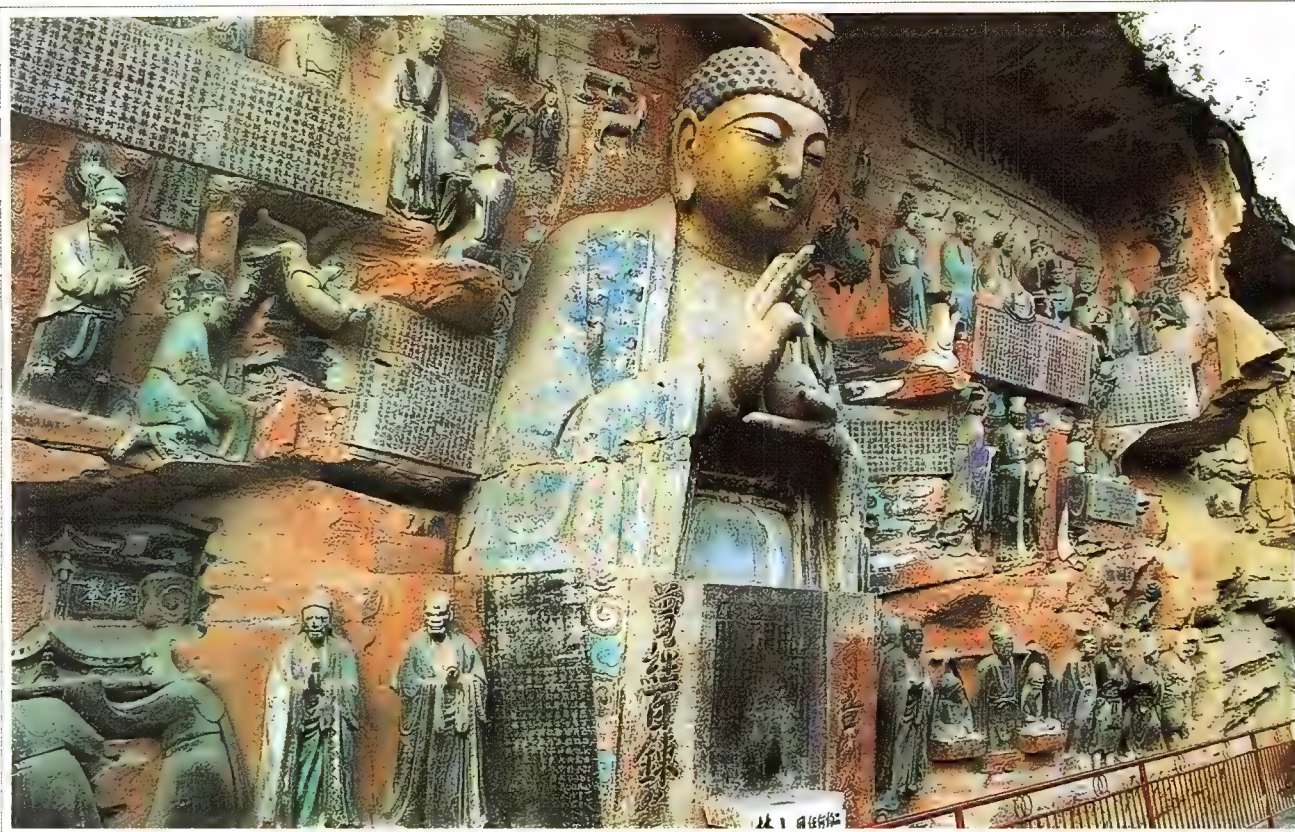




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### Baoding Mountain Cliff Carvings

Baoding (Holy Summit) Mountain is one of China's Buddhist sanctuaries and is held to be the second most flourishing Buddhist holy land in Sichuan Province, following Mount Emei. The Baoding Mountain rock carvings were created by the renowned Southern Song-dynasty monk Zhao Zhifeng in 70-odd years from 1174 to 1252. The 13 groups of stone carvings of 10,000 images stretch for 2.5 km, centred around the Greater and Lesser Vales of

Buddha. The largest collection and the best preserved carvings are found at the Greater Vale of Buddha.

The Dafowan (Greater Vale of Buddha) is a horse-shoe shaped valley with carvings on its eastern, southern and northern cliffs, 500 metres long and 15 to 30 metres tall. The carvings, in different images and on a wide range of subjects, include *The Guardians of the Dharma (Law)*, *The Six Cycles of Transmigration*, *The Three Sages of Huayan*, *The Thousand-Hand Goddess of Mercy*, *Sakyamuni in Nirvana* and *The Holy Cow Grazing Ground*.

With the exquisite techniques reflected in decoration, plot, drainage, lighting, support and laws of perspective, and the harmonious combination of each of these aspects, the Baoding Mountain cliff carvings are considered the exemplary works of grotto art in China.

Location: 15 km from Dazu

Admission: Baoding Mountain: 50 yuan;

Shengshou Temple: 2 yuan



### Previous page

1. *The Three Sages of Huayan*
2. *The Guardians of the Dharma*
3. *The Six Cycles of Transmigration*

### This page

1. The exquisite craftsmanship of the carvings is still discernible.
2. *The Holy Cow Grazing Ground*
3. *The Chicken Breeder*
4. An image of Samantabhadra on Beishan Mountain
- 5-6. Two finely detailed groups of carvings on Beishan Mountain



## Beishan Mountain Cliff Carvings

The carving of Beishan (North) Mountain started in 892 in the late Tang Dynasty and continued through the Five Dynasties into the Song Dynasty, lasting for about 250 years. It is the former site of Yongchang Village, where Wei Junjing, the prefectural governor of Changzhou of the late Tang period, stationed his troops and stored grain. Wei was the one who initiated the creation of cliff carvings at the mountain.

The Beishan Mountain cliff carvings are divided into the northern and southern sections. A honeycomb of niches housing nearly 10,000 images fill the cliff, which is 300 metres long and 7 to 10 metres tall. The carvings here are remarkable for their delicate craftsmanship and elegant postures. They also exhibit the transformation of the Buddhist religious beliefs of the people and the style of grotto art through four dynasties from the late 9th century to mid-12th century.

The majority of carvings created during the late Tang period depict Guanyin (Goddess of Mercy) with Ksitigarbha in the same niche, as well as Amitabha in

attendance of Guanyin and Ksitigarbha.

Beishan Mountain has the lion's share of carvings of the Five Dynasties period in the country. The carvings dating back to this period account for more than one-third of the total carvings here. The Five Dynasties served as a period of transition of grotto art between the late Tang and the Song Dynasty. New contents emerged and the images were carved with dainty features, diverse postures, carefree expressions and elaborate details.

Song-dynasty carvings at Beishan feature as many as 21 subjects. The carvings of Guanyin of this period reached their acme and Beishan Mountain is famed as the showcase of Guanyin statues of China. Many works of this time depict people's daily life and reflect the concepts of beauty in the Song Dynasty.

Location: 1.5 km from Longgang Town

Admission: 40 yuan

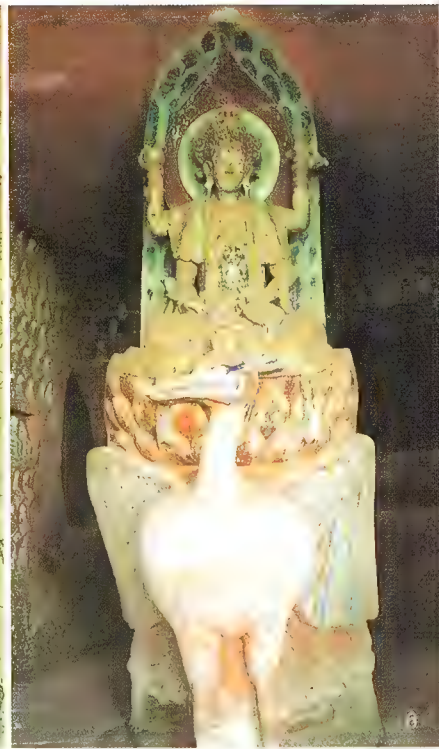
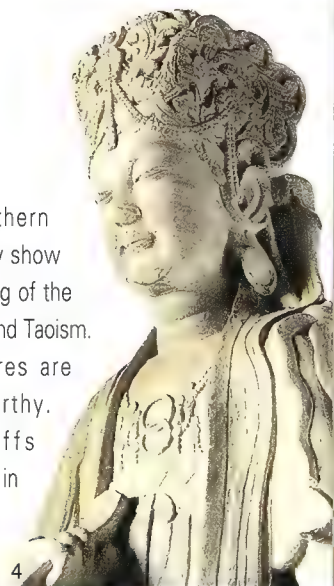
## Other Cliff Carvings in the Area

The carvings in the Shimen (Stone Gate) Mountain area, 20 km from Dazu, were created from 1094 to 1151 in the

Northern and Southern Song dynasties. They show a harmonious blending of the beliefs of Buddhism and Taoism. The Taoist sculptures are especially noteworthy. The carved cliffs measure 71.8 metres in length and 3.4 to 5 metres in height.

The carvings at Shizhuan (Stone Inscription) Mountain, 25 km from Dazu, were created between 1082 and 1096 in the Northern Song period. They are typical examples of grotto art combining Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. The cliffs with carvings measure 130 metres long and 3 to 9 metres tall.

Nanshan Cliff Carvings, 2 km from the town of Dazu, were created in the Southern Song Dynasty between 1131 and 1162. They are the most complete collection of Taoist carvings in China. The carved cliffs are 86 metres long and 3.5 to 10.2 metres tall. Some of the masterpieces are found in the Sanqing Ancient Cave, Dragon Cave and Emperor Zhenwu Niche.



## Longshui Lake Tourist Area

Longshui, only 18 km from the county town of Dazu and 16 km from the Chengdu-Chongqing railway and expressway, is the renowned home of metals in China. As many as 200 types of metal products of 2,000 models are produced here, of which kitchen knives are the most well-known.

The 76-square-km town of Longshui has a population of more than 80,000 people with 33 villages under its jurisdiction. Its history of metalwork dates back to the early Song Dynasty 1,000 years ago. Today, there are 6,418 enterprises in the industry with personnel reaching 22,000 people.

Longshui also boasts wonderful scenery, making it a popular tourist destination. Longshui Lake Tourist Area, only 5 km from the town of Longshui, is a beautiful combination of mountains and waters. The 370-hectare Longshui Lake is dotted with 108 islets of various charms. The harmonious landscape and the poetic atmosphere make boating on the lake a pleasant experience in which you can enjoy yourself amidst the beauty of nature.

Admission: Longshui Lake Tourist Area: 5 yuan; Water Amusement Park: 10 yuan; Longshui Lake Pine and Crane Mountain Villa: 5 yuan; Spinulose Tree Fern Reserve: 10 yuan

## Festivals and Local Art

Baoding Mountain Incense Fair has a long history, but it is impossible to trace its

origin. It is widely known among the local people. It is believed that the Goddess of Mercy has three "birthdays" — she was born on the 19th day of the 2nd lunar month, became a Buddhist on the 19th day of the 6th lunar month and ascended the lotus throne on the 19th day of the 9th lunar month. On these three special occasions, pilgrims from near and afar arrive at Baoding Mountain to pay their respects to the goddess.

To show their devotion, some of the pilgrims come on foot instead of using any form of transportation, forming an exceptionally magnificent procession along the mountain path. Every year, nearly one million pilgrims and travellers visit the mountain, with the time around the 19th day of the 2nd lunar month being the peak period.

Dazu Carp Lantern Dance is a local art form for festival celebrations and the only one of its kind in the country. Its rich local colour and distinctive performing style always impress the audience.

The long-standing history and cultural development of Dazu have left behind not only a great deal of marvelous stone carving works, but also the wondrous skill of stone sculpture. Folk artisans who have inherited the style and techniques of their brilliant predecessors produce carvings on various subjects, such as statuettes of Guanyin, Maitreya and historical figures, and figurines of animals in stone or jade. Vivid and expressive, these delicately carved



sculptures are exported to over 40 countries and regions. They make wonderful souvenirs for tourists to Dazu.

*Translated by Jess Tang*

1. An expressive sculpture on Shizhuan Mountain
2. Longshui Lake Tourist Area
3. Stone carving works — popular souvenirs from Dazu
4. A scene at the Baoding Mountain Incense Fair
5. The delicious Youting Crucian Carp
6. The distinctive style of the Dazu Carp Lantern Dance



## TIPS FOR THE TRAVELLER

### • Transport

Chongqing can be reached by air from many major cities in China. In Chongqing, trains going to Panzhihua in Yunnan, Xi'an in Shaanxi, and Yibin and Neijiang in Sichuan stop at Dazu.

Alternatively, go to Dazu by long-distance buses either from Chongqing or Chengdu in Sichuan. In Chongqing, daily buses leave for Dazu, 81 km away, from the Chaotianmen Tourist Bus Terminus, Caiyuanba Long-distance Bus Terminus and Chenjiaping Long-distance Bus Terminus. Ticket: around 27 yuan. In Chengdu, daily buses leave for Dazu, 260 km away, from the New South Gate Terminus, Hehuachi Terminus and Chengbei Passenger Transportation Centre. Ticket: around 51 yuan.

### • Accommodation

**Dazu Hotel \*\*\*:** Standard room: 180 yuan and 360 yuan; Tel: (23) 4372 1888

**Beishan Hotel:** Standard room: 180 yuan; Tel: (23) 4372 2888

**Longshui Lake Hotel:** Standard room: 110 yuan; Tel: (23) 4362 5888

**Lianyi Hotel:** Standard room: 220 yuan; Tel: (23) 4362 8008

**Wudu Longshui Lake Holiday Resort:** Standard room: 210 yuan; Tel: (23) 4362 6688

**Laodong Hotel:** Standard room: 120 yuan; Tel: (23) 4372 2988

**Zhongfa Hotel:** Standard room: 100 yuan; Tel: (23) 4362 5377

**Lotus Flower Mountain Villa:** Standard room: 80 yuan; Tel: (23) 4372 8220

### • Local Delicacies

**Lotus Fish:** The "lotus fish" comes from a lotus pond three km from Dazu. As its name indicates, this fish is cooked together with lotus flowers. It is loved by many gourmets for its sweet flavour and colourful appearance. Price: around 20 yuan

**Youting Crucian Carp:** This famous dish of Dazu has a long history. It has become more and more popular in recent years in southwestern China, for the carp is fresh and tender, and the spicy soup is rich and aromatic, yet not at all stimulating. Price: around 15 yuan per 500 g

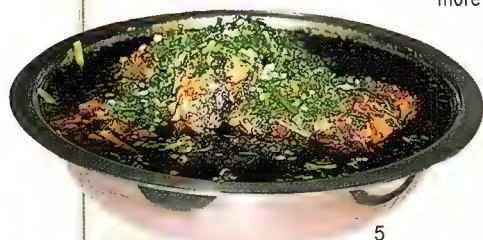
### • Recommended Restaurants

**Tangcheng Restaurant:** Tel: (23) 4373 3936

**Sister Liu's Youting Crucian Carp Restaurant:** Tel: (23) 4352 8419

**Yang Family Youting Crucian Carp Restaurant:** Tel: (23) 4352 8302

**Chen Family Youting Crucian Carp Restaurant:** Tel: (23) 4352 8818





## Capturing Lotus Flowers

*Article by Huang Songhui*

Lotus flowers are loved by many owing to their elegant beauty and the symbol they represent — standing clean despite the muddy environment they grow in. Since ancient times, Chinese painters, poets and literati of various periods have left many excellent works

depicting lotus flowers. In contemporary society, lotus flowers have again become the eternal subject of the rising artistic photography.

Early summer last year in Honghu Park in Shenzhen, I saw the vast expanse of blooming lotus flowers and could not resist the temptation to click away. Thus began my lotus flower photography.

The best time for lotus flower photos is in early morning before the rosy dawn clouds disperse. When I do this, I always arrive at the pond before 6 a.m. and have my equipment ready before the first ray shows up. I usually use zooms of 250mm to 400mm. Using a standard lens

and large aperture you can shoot quality photos, but a zoom or a reflecting lens is more flexible, making it possible to obtain some unconventional results.

Besides a strong tripod and a shutter wire, you'd better bring a water sprinkler and a fishing pole. The sprinkler is to spread water on the lotus leaves; with the fishing pole, you can adjust the positions of the flowers to compose the best picture.

The speed should be decided according to the light, but when there is wind, the shutter should not be slower than 1/60 second. With no wind, it can be as slow as 1-2 seconds. However, sometimes, using a slow shutter, you can shoot an interesting photo of lotus swinging in the wind.

To eliminate reflections of the water and to strengthen the flower's colour, add a polariser. A double-exposure is also worth trying; it may make the picture hazy and more delicate.


Using back light is one of the best ways to depict lotus flowers with striking colours, but a lens hood should be used. On a cloudy or rainy day when the sunshine



doesn't radiate, the photo may be over-coloured and look flat.

Getting a dragonfly into your photo with the lotus makes a wonderful picture. Never follow the flying dragonfly, just wait for it to land on the lotus and quickly press the shutter.

As lotus flowers and leaves grow disorderly and the sunlight is not adjustable, the photo commonly appears unfocussed. That is why you need a zoom to concentrate on the main subject and at the same time blur the surroundings. To achieve this, you can choose to have massive grass, tree leaves and lotus leaves in the foreground.

Some photographers like to create a certain atmosphere by using a special-effect lens or filter. If you believe the daylight is not right, try it at night, bringing your flash and a proper outdoor light. A photo taken in this way, with its surroundings blurred, has a stage effect. If it is possible to take the lotus home, you can take still photos as well. 

1. With a 500mm zoom, the lotus bud is tightly focused, while the rest of the picture is blurred. (by Huang Songhui)
2. With a dark background, what is happening on the seedpod becomes more vivid. (by Tong Hanfang)
3. Poetry in action (by Tang Hanfang)
4. The objects in the foreground and the large aperture helped produce this poetic photo. (by Huang Songhui)





# The Old Village of Yangyuan

*Photos & article by Wu Shuijin*

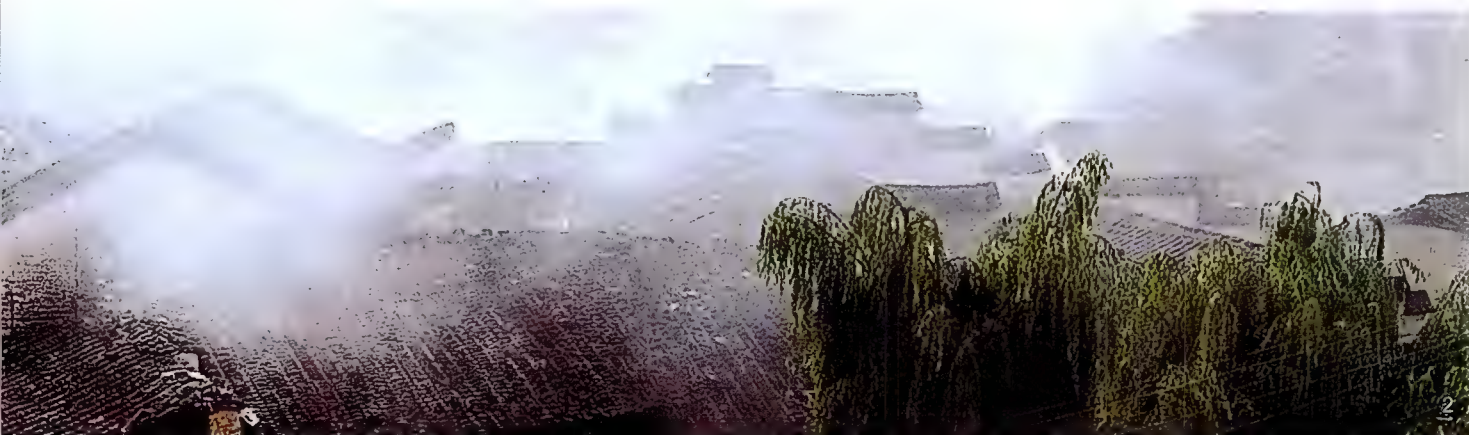
Yangyuan Village, in Zhenghe County, Fujian Province, is an ancient village over 1,000 years old. Its 2,000-odd families are all surnamed Zhang and live in houses with tiled roofs built in the late Ming (1368-1644) or early Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.

## A Stream of Thousands of Carp

One autumn morning in Yangyuan Village, I watched smoke rising from household kitchen chimneys and small groups of school children carrying books walking along the criss-crossing small lanes. In the faint

rays of dawn, a clear stream ran sluggishly through the village. This is the well-known Liyu (Carp) Stream.

After breakfast, I went for a stroll along the stream. In this shallow stream less than four metres wide and about five km long, huge schools of big carp swim back and forth freely. The local folks explain that for hundreds of years the villagers have regarded the carp as "divine fish" and no one dares kill any. A legend says that the divine carp had saved the life of a remote ancestor. Since then, carp has been living in this village harmoniously with people.



Suddenly I heard gongs and drums in the distance, near a temple. This temple, called Guanjie, was first built in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127) to commemorate Zhang Bagong, who was the village's founder and a former imperial army general. He won many battles for the court and was highly praised by the emperor. Unfortunately, due to jealousy of some treacherous court officials, he was forced to leave the army and return home. The present temple was rebuilt in the Qing Dynasty.

## Siping Opera

It was the fifth day of the eighth lunar month, the first of the three traditional days for worshipping this Zhang ancestor. Opera performances form an indispensable part of the programme with three shows every day. The villagers stage the Siping Opera, which is regarded as a living fossil of opera by today's theatrical circles. About 450 years ago, Siping Opera, also known as the "Common Folks' Opera", was introduced from Jiangxi, and blended with the local singing style. It is quite rustic and simple, with no musical score, and when the singer comes to the last sentence of each stanza, all the others join in. Only percussion instruments such as the gong, drum, cymbal and clapper accompany the performers.

By the mid-Qing Dynasty, Siping Opera had declined to the point of extinction as many new varieties of opera emerged. The Chinese theatrical circles had deemed it lost until the 1980s when Siping Opera was found to be well preserved in Yangyuan Village. Great interest was aroused with the further discovery of Qing-dynasty hand-written copies of the operas *Qin Shimei* and *The Meeting of*

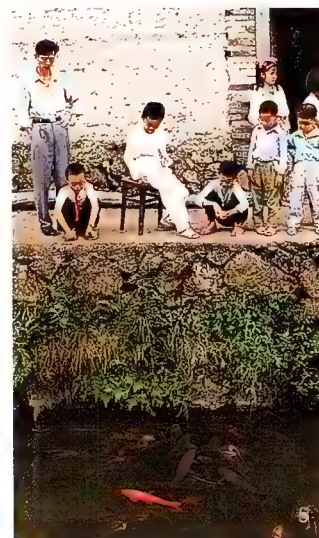


*Heroes, and costumes roughly woven with feathers.*

## Ancestor-Worshipping Ceremony

The grand worshipping ceremony took place in the morning. Deafening sounds of home-made blunderbusses, firecrackers, bugles, gongs and drums shook the earth, and colourful flags and banners fluttered everywhere. The whole village seethed with activity. The procession of worshippers carried portraits of their ancestor and marched forward in a long stream, followed by other villagers, toward the Guanghui Palace, their ancestor's drill ground. By the time the procession had returned to the Guanjie Temple it was noon, and every household began preparing a big feast to entertain relatives and friends from afar.

*Translated by Xiong Zhenru*



1. A performance of the ancient Siping Opera
2. Yangyuan Village in the morning mist
3. The procession of the ancestor-worshipping ceremony
4. The Carp Stream running through the village
5. There's plenty of carp in the stream.

# China

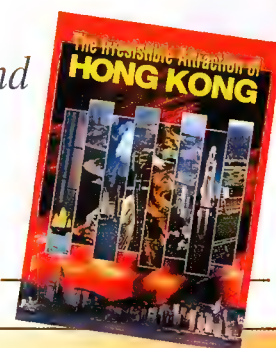
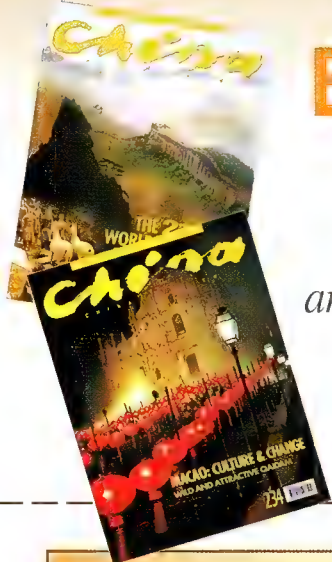
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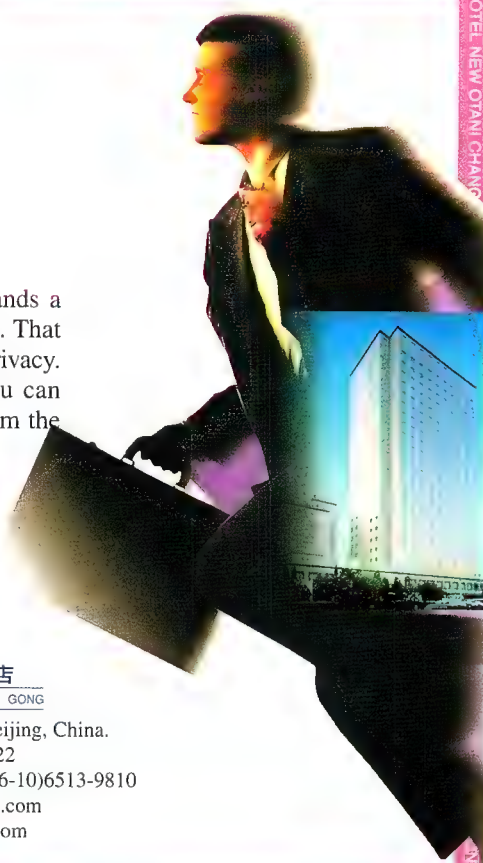
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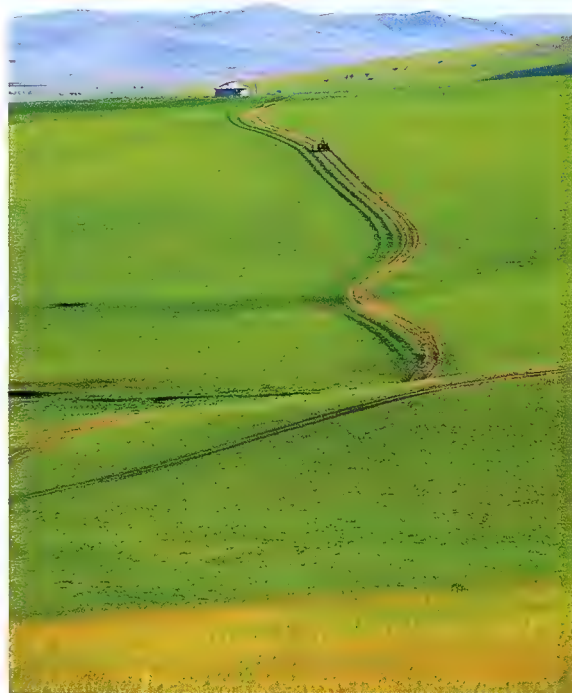
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## Highlights of Issue No. 241

## NEXT ISSUE

- Hulun Buir League** in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region boasts the largest and the most beautiful grassland in China. However, its allure lies not only in the endless verdure rolling into the horizon: the annual Nadam, a traditional festival of the Mongolians, is a demonstration of rich ethnic colour; the Hulun Nur and Buir Nur, two major lakes in Inner Mongolia, are the precious gems embedded on the grassland; the Ergun River marking the boundary of China and Russia excites its visitors with an exceptional border cruise. In addition, there are the Greater Hinggan Mountains, a paradise of greenery and the home of the Ewenki people who earn a living by raising reindeer...
- The charming coastal city of **Qingdao** in Shandong Province is widely known for its incomparable sea views and beautiful beaches, and its hundred-year-old buildings in exotic styles. The Tsing Tao Beer produced here and the international beer festival held annually further increase the worldwide fame of Qingdao. Our reporter shares with you his enjoyment of this lovely seaside city.



## Hotels in Jiangsu

City	Name	Star	Address	Postcode	Tel	Fax
Nanjing	Jinling Hotel	*****	Xinjiekou Square, Nanjing	210005	(25) 4455888	(25) 4703396
	Central Hotel	****	75 Zhongshan Rd, Nanjing	210005	(25) 4400888	(25) 4414194
	Nanjing Xuanwu Hotel	****	193 Zhongyang Rd, Nanjing	210009	(25) 3303888	(25) 6639624
	Nanjing Mandarin Chamber Hotel	***	9 Zhuangyuanjing, Fuzi Temple, Nanjing	210001	(25) 2201876	(25) 2202555
	Nanjing Hotel	***	259 Zhongshan Rd N, Nanjing	210003	(25) 3302302	(25) 3306998
Yangzhou	Yangzhou Xiyuan Hotel	****	1 Upper Fengle Street, Yangzhou	225002	(514) 7344888	(514) 7233870
	Yangzhou Hotel	***	5 Upper Fengle Street, Yangzhou	225002	(514) 7342611	(514) 7343599
	The Shita Hotel of Yangzhou	***	18 Shita St, Yangzhou	225002	(514) 7344467	(514) 7314125
Zhenjiang	Zhenjiang Hotel	***	92 Zhongshan Rd W, Zhenjiang	212004	(511) 5233888	(511) 5231055
	Jinshan Hotel Zhenjiang	**	1 Jinshan Rd W, Zhenjiang	212002	(511) 5623888	(511) 5624530
	Zhenjiang International Hotel		218 Jiefang Rd, Zhenjiang		(511) 5021888	
Changzhou	Changzhou Grand Hotel	***	65 Yanling Rd W, Changzhou	213003	(519) 8109988	(519) 8107701
	Jiangnanchun Hotel Changzhou	***	39 Yingbin Rd, Changzhou	213001	(519) 6643663	(519) 6641498
	Gongyuan Hotel	**	85 Yanling Rd W, Changzhou	213003	(519) 6602606	(519) 6600577
	Minhang Hotel Changzhou	**	35 Bo'ai Rd, Changzhou	213003	(519) 8107222	(519) 8107551
Wuxi	The Pan Pacific Hotel Wuxi	****	1 Liangqing Rd, Wuxi	214061	(510) 5806789	(510) 2700991
	Xizhou Hotel	****	68 Erquan Rd C, Wuxi		(510) 8702888	(510) 8701965
	Hubin Hotel Wuxi	****	Liyuan, Hubin Rd, Wuxi	214075	(510) 5101888	(510) 5102637
	Holiday Inn Milido Wuxi	***	2 Liangxi Rd, Wuxi	214062	(510) 6765665	(510) 6701668
	Huagong Hotel Wuxi	***	51 Renmin Rd W, Wuxi	214031	(510) 2711888	(510) 2714052
Suzhou	Sheraton Suzhou Hotel & Towers	*****	388 Xinshi Rd, Suzhou	215007	(512) 5103388	(512) 5100888
	Suzhou Hotel (New Building)	****	115 Shiquan St, Suzhou	215006	(512) 5204646	(512) 5204015
	Bamboo Grove Hotel	****	168 Zhuhui Rd, Suzhou	215006	(512) 5205601	(512) 5208778
	Xucheng Hotel Suzhou	***	120 Sanxiang Rd, Suzhou	215004	(512) 8286688	(512) 8271520
	Nanlin Hotel Suzhou	***	20 Gunxiufang, Suzhou	215006	(512) 5224641	(512) 5231028
	Suzhou Friendship Hotel	**	Zhuhui Rd, Suzhou	215007	(512) 5291601	(512) 5206221
	Garden Hotel Suzhou	**	99 Liuyuan Rd, Suzhou	215008	(512) 5331013	(512) 5334559
	Gloria Plaza Hotel		535 Ganjiang Rd E, Suzhou	215006	(512) 5218855	(512) 5218533

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Beijing — Nanjing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0730	0915	CA1507
	2 3 4 6 7	1110	1240	FM 156
	1	1130	1325	WH2846
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1205	1335	MU5110
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1225	1415	CA1537
	1 3 4 6 7	1350	1520	H4 122
	2 5	1650	1820	H4 282
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1735	1900	CA1503
	1 6	1750	1925	CZ8756
	4	1750	1940	WH2846
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	2000	2140	MU5170
Nanjing — Beijing	1	0855	1050	WH2845
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0945	1125	MU5109
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1000	1145	CA1508
	2 5	1130	1310	H4 221
	1 3 4 6 7	1135	1300	H4 121
	2 3 4 6 7	1345	1520	FM 155
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1455	1640	CA1538
	4	1520	1710	WH2845
	1 6	1530	1710	CZ8755
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1735	1915	MU5169
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1945	2135	CA1504
Chongqing — Nanjing	7	0740	0930	SZ4545
	1 3 6	0905	1050	SZ4545
	2 4 6	1250	1540	WH2858
Nanjing — Chongqing	3 6	2010	2145	MU5448
	2 4 6	0840	1210	WH2857
	7	1010	1210	SZ4546
Nanjing — Chongqing	1 3 6	1130	1330	SZ4546
	3 6	1350	1550	MU5447
Dalian — Nanjing	3 6	1200	1330	CJ6385
	4 7	1230	1405	CJ6527
	2 6	1340	1505	H4 226
	1 2 3 4	1945	2115	MU5622
	5 7	2035	2155	MU5622
Nanjing — Dalian	2 6	1120	1220	H4 225
	1 2 3 4	1725	1900	MU5621
	5 7	1825	1950	MU5621
	4 7	1855	2020	CJ6528
	3 6	1950	2110	CJ6386
Fuzhou — Nanjing	1 5	1120	1235	WH2822
	1 4	1220	1320	IV8609
	3 6	1225	1320	IV8613
	1 3 6	1325	1505	MU7506
	2 7	1535	1650	MU5530
	4 7	1645	1805	CJ6528
Nanjing — Fuzhou	1 5	0905	1030	WH2821
	1 3 6	1105	1245	MU7505
	2 7	1340	1455	MU5529
	4 7	1450	1605	CJ6527
	3 6	2000	2110	IV8614
	1 4	2050	2155	IV8610

Route	Days	Dep.	Arr.	Flight
Guangzhou — Nanjing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0950	1140	CZ3513
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1050	1250	FM 356
	3 5	1230	1605	FM 334
	1 2 3 4 6	1440	1645	MU5338
	5 7	1545	1735	MU5338
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1630	1830	CZ3507
	4 7	1640	2025	WH2834
	1 4 7	2005	2145	MU5334
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0800	0950	MU5337
	3 5	0810	1130	FM 333
Nanjing — Guangzhou	4 7	0905	1240	WH2833
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1225	1420	CZ3514
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1330	1530	FM 355
	1 4 7	1720	1920	MU5333
	2 5	1905	2100	H4 282
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1910	2105	CZ3508
Guiyang — Nanjing	3 7	1230	1530	WH2820
	1 5	1250	1620	WH2864
	2 3 6	1820	2135	MU5440
Nanjing — Guiyang	3 7	0815	1150	WH2819
	1 5	0830	1210	WH2863
	2 3 6	1430	1740	MU5439
Lanzhou — Nanjing	5	0840	1120	WH2807
	3 6	1900	2125	WH2826
Nanjing — Lanzhou	3 6	0825	1055	WH2825
	5	1705	1955	WH2808
Qingdao — Nanjing	1 3 4 6	0820	0945	SC 735
	2 5 7	0830	0950	SC 735
	4	1235	1400	SC 739
	1 4	1540	1640	MU5666
	7	1545	1700	WH2840
	2 5	1550	1700	WH2840
Nanjing — Qingdao	2 5 7	0750	0900	WH2839
	1 4	0845	0950	MU5665
	1 3 4 6	1030	1155	SC 736
	4	1845	2015	SC 740
	2 5 7	1915	2040	SC 736
Shenyang — Nanjing	2 5 7	0805	1030	CJ6381
	3 6	0920	1125	CJ6357
Nanjing — Shenyang	2 5 7	1615	1810	CJ6382
	3 6	1850	2040	CJ6358
Taiyuan — Nanjing	7	0815	0945	MU7509
	1 3 6	0815	0950	MU7505
	2 5	1640	1810	MU7706
Nanjing — Taiyuan	2 5	1415	1600	MU7705
	7	1500	1700	MU7510
	1 3 6	1555	1800	MU7506
Urümqi — Nanjing	3 6	1535	2125	WH2826
Nanjing — Urümqi	3 6	0825	1455	WH2825
Xi'an — Nanjing	2 6	1115	1300	MU5234
	1 3 5	1605	1755	WH2866
	4 6 7	1905	2035	WH2866
	2	2020	2210	WH2866
Nanjing — Xi'an	2 6	0830	1025	MU5233
	1 3 5	1320	1520	WH2865
	4 6 7	1630	1825	WH2865
	2	1740	1940	WH2865

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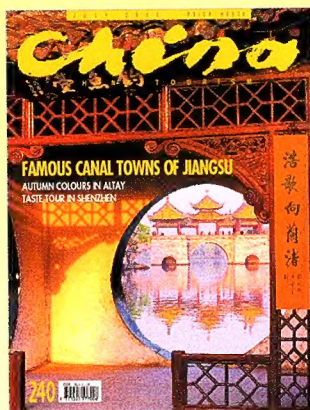
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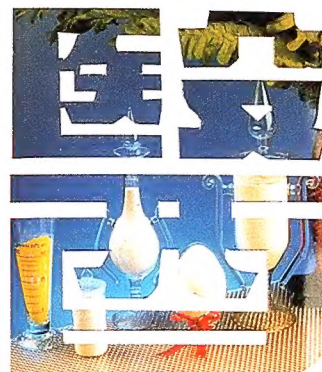
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總經理：蔣震偉  
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E-mail: mehecosl@public8.sta.net.cn



# The Enjoyable Shopping at Beijing Lufthansa Center



On the shore of the placid Liangma River in eastern part of Beijing, the imposing Lufthansa Youyi Shopping Centre stands in the style of an European castle, occupying an area of 6,000 square metres. Along with five-star hotels such as Kempinski, Kunlun and Great Wall Sheraton in the vicinity, this shopping centre greatly contributes to this emerging prosperous commercial area.

It has been eight years since the Lufthansa Youyi Shopping Centre opened on June 30, 1992. The first retail enterprise with both local and foreign capital since the founding of New China, this shopping centre is the forerunner in the industry. It has adopted a modern management and administration system which is embodied in the following aspects:

**Pioneering management concept:** To become "the best in the country and in line with international standards" is Lufthansa's ultimate target. To provide "a most enjoyable shopping experience" is Lufthansa's promise to its customers.

**Precise market positioning:** Lufthansa markets its merchandise as "middle and higher class" products targeting customers who have comparatively higher spending power, foreign residents in Beijing and overseas tourist groups. The sales figures have proved Lufthansa's tactic successful.

**Advanced management and sales strategies:** Lufthansa establishes its own management and sales strategies with experience from the leading shopping centres both at home and abroad. They have changed the business relationship between customers and vendors into one that involves satisfaction in customer services. The key to achieving this is to "respect and understand" the customers' needs.

**Professional and systematic product management:** At present, Lufthansa merchandises 400,000 items of quality commodities of 100,000 varieties. Almost all the famous domestic brands can be found in Lufthansa, in addition to 500 international labels.

A window in Beijing which showcases China's reform and opening-up policy, Lufthansa Youyi Shopping Centre has received hundreds of thousands of local and foreign customers, including a good number of heads of state and governments, and international celebrities. It is also the appointed shopping centre for the attendants of major international events held in Beijing, such as the UN World Women's Conference and the Special Olympics of Far East and Southeast Asia.



**北京燕莎友谊商城有限公司**

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